

HISTORIC PHILADELPHIA

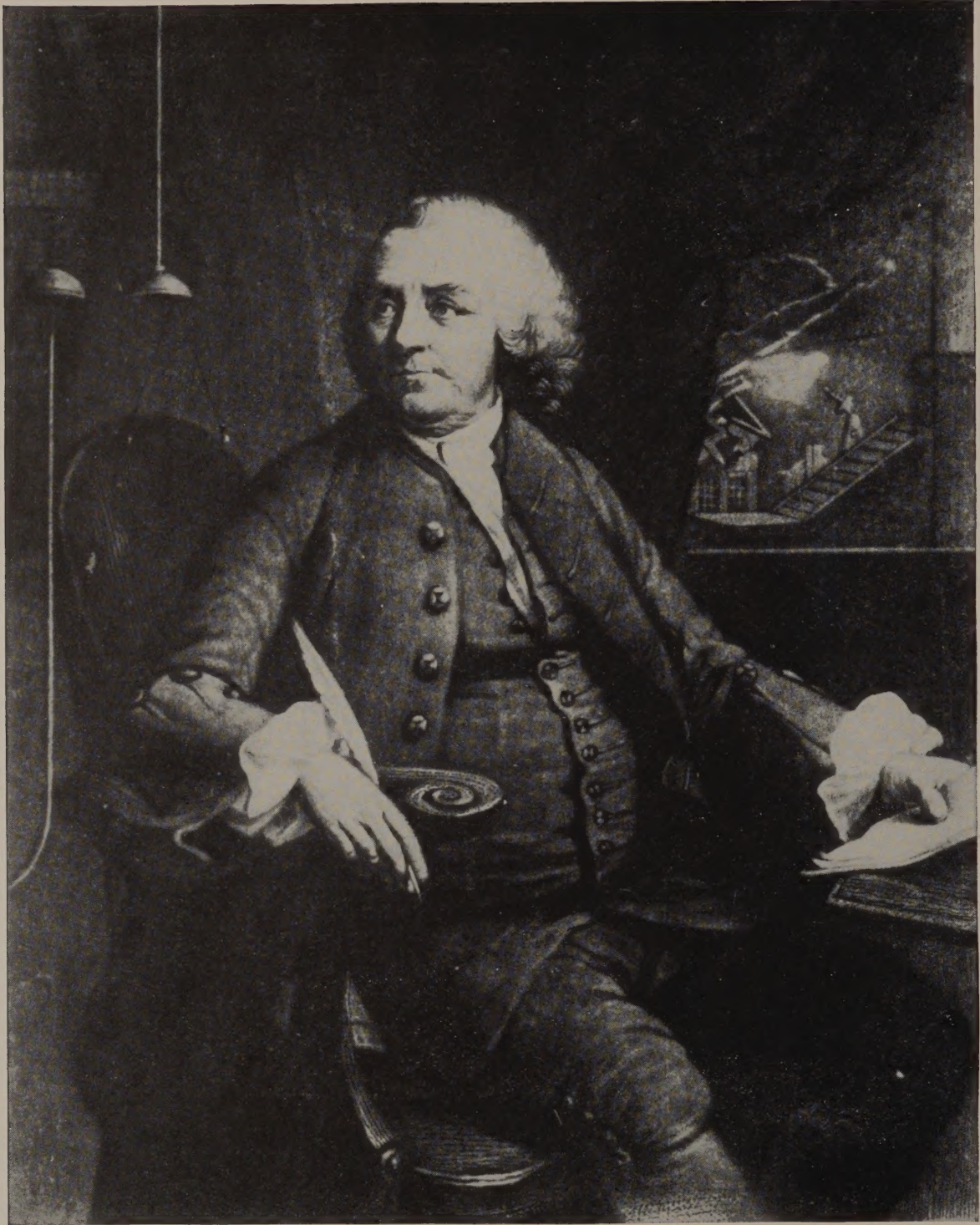
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Benjamin Franklin in 1762, at the height of his powers particularly in the field of science. Engraving from a mezzotint by C. Turner of the portrait by Mason Chamberlin.

HISTORIC PHILADELPHIA

FROM THE FOUNDING UNTIL THE EARLY
NINETEENTH CENTURY

Papers Dealing with its People and Buildings
with an Illustrative Map

Issued as Volume 43, Part 1, of the Transactions of the
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for Promoting Useful Knowledge
Independence Square
1953

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PREFACE

In October 1951 there was brought to the attention of the Committee on Publications of the American Philosophical Society a large drawing of a map showing the location of present and past buildings of Old Philadelphia in the area bounded by Vine, Lombard, Seventh Streets, and the Delaware River, which was prepared by Mr. Grant M. Simon after years of research. It was suggested that the Society might publish this map together with an article on Old Philadelphia in its *Transactions* if suitable terms were made with Mr. Simon. It was proposed that the Society publish the map with the statement, "Published by the American Philosophical Society for its *Transactions*," with the understanding that Mr. Simon would be allowed to have copies made from the plates for his own use and sale. Mr. Simon was agreeable to this proposal, and the map was published in the spring of 1952.

At the same time the interpretation of the phrase "for its *Transactions*" was considered. Instead of having one article and the map as previously proposed, it was decided that there be a number of articles, each dealing with a particular subject, and the Editor was requested to formulate a plan and secure the papers.

The Editor associated with him in this undertaking William E. Lingelbach, Librarian of the Society, and two members of the National Park Service Staff of Independence National Historical Park, Charles E. Peterson, Resident Architect, and Edward M. Riley, Chief Park Historian. This group chose the subjects of the papers and the persons to be requested to write

them, several of the latter being associated with Dr. Riley in his office. It recognized that the contents are not completely inclusive. In fact, articles on individual historic houses of importance in old Philadelphia have not been included but illustrations, either of the exterior or interior, or some of these have been. This volume is the result.

Many of the articles contain pictures of persons having an important part in the early history of the subject of the paper. When these papers are read it will be seen that Benjamin Franklin had a vital part in many, and consequently his portrait is the frontispiece of the volume.

A copy of the map is placed in an envelope at the back of the volume. In each article when a building is mentioned which is referred to on the map, there is an indication as to where it may be found. In certain cases a reference is made to the Index which appears on the right hand side of the map and which contains historical information. When the map was drawn, and before plans were made for its use in connection with the *Transactions*, Mr. Simon had included some little sketches of buildings which no longer exist. These do not appear where the buildings actually were and this must be borne in mind when the map is consulted. Attention has been called to certain changes which should be made in statements on the map and these have been collected at the end of the volume.

LUTHER P. EISENHART, *Editor*

October 1952

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THE INDEPENDENCE HALL GROUP

EDWARD M. RILEY

Chief Park Historian, Independence National Historical Park Project

STANDING in Independence Square are three buildings—Independence Hall, Congress Hall, and the Old City Hall—undoubtedly the most important group of buildings in the early history of the United States. Independence Hall was built originally as the State House of the Province of Pennsylvania;¹ during the Colonial period the Assembly, Council, and Supreme Court of the Province met here. From 1775 to 1783 the Continental Congress and the Congress of the Confederation held most of their sessions in this building.² In it Independence was declared and the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union began their short-lived career.³ Here was written the Federal Constitution as well as the state constitutions of 1776 and 1790.⁴ Following

¹ The building was known generally as the State House until the last half of the nineteenth century when the name Independence Hall began to be used. See Etting, Frank M., *An historical account of the Old State House of Pennsylvania now known as the Hall of Independence*, Phila., Porter and Coates, 1891. In the early period it was also referred to as the "Province-hall." See *Votes of Assembly, Penna. Archives* (Eighth Series) 3: 2302, Harrisburg, published by the State, 1931. Hereafter cited as *Votes*. From the 1820's on the Assembly Room in which independence of the United States had been declared was called the Hall of Independence or Independence Hall. Sometimes it was also referred to as the Hall of the Declaration, and Independence chamber. The use of "Independence Hall" to designate the entire building rather than just the Assembly Room appears by implication as early as 1850; but the first clear-cut evidence of such use appears in 1852. See *Journal of Common Council* (Oct. 17, 1851 to Oct. 7, 1852), 198, 230, Phila., King and Baird, 1852.

² The Second Continental Congress met in the State House from May 10, 1775 to December 12, 1776. After a stay of less than three months in Baltimore, they returned to Philadelphia from March 4, 1777 to September 18, 1777. The occupation of Philadelphia by the British forced the Congress to move to Lancaster and later to York, Pennsylvania. The Congress returned to the State House on July 2, 1778 and held its sessions there until June 21, 1783 when they removed to Princeton, New Jersey. Ford, Worthington C., ed., *Journals of the Continental Congress*, 34 v., Washington, Gov't. Printing Office, 1904-1937; Burnett, Edmund C., ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, 8 v., Washington, Carnegie Institution, 1921-1936 (hereafter cited as Burnett, *Letters*); Burnett, Edmund C., *The Continental Congress*, N. Y., Macmillan, 1941.

³ Richard Henry Lee's resolution of independence was passed by the Congress on July 2, 1776 and the Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776. Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 507, 510-515, 1906; Becker, Carl, *The Declaration of Independence, a study in the history of political ideas*, 3, 172-193, N. Y., Peter Smith, 1933. The Articles of Confederation were framed partly in Philadelphia, but were also considered further, and submitted to the States, while the Congress was sitting at York, Pa. The Articles were finally ratified and went into effect at Philadelphia on March 1, 1781. Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 546, 674; 7: 240, 287, 300, 328, 351; 8: 492, 501; 9: 778-907; Burnett, *Continental Congress*, *passim*, 500.

⁴ [Pennsylvania], *Journal of House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1776-1781* 1: 49, 89, Phila-

the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the Pennsylvania legislative and judicial branches remained in the State House, while the corresponding parts of the new national government were housed in the new county courthouse (just to the west of the State House) and in the new City Hall to the east.⁵

INDEPENDENCE SQUARE

Originally the land bounded by Chestnut, Walnut, Fifth, and Sixth Streets, now called Independence Square,⁶ was set aside by William Penn as "bonus lots." To each purchaser of a substantial farm, or "country lot," Penn also gave a city lot as a bonus. The pieces in this particular square were given to Welsh Friends who settled in Radnor township.⁷

By the time the ground along Chestnut Street was acquired to erect a State House, most of the original owners had already sold their parcels. By deed dated October 15, 1730, the first lot on the square was purchased by William Allen for the use of the Province.⁸ Within the next two years the entire Chestnut Street frontage, extending halfway back to Walnut Street, had been secured. Construction of the State House was begun in 1732.

The desire to provide a proper setting for the State House was evident from the beginning. In the same year that the building was begun, the Assembly considered leveling the site and enclosing it with a board fence "in order that Walks may be laid out, and Trees planted, to render the same more beautiful and commodious."⁹ It is not known whether this project was carried out.

Soon afterward, on February 20, 1736, the Assembly determined on a most important policy. In an act vesting the State House and its grounds in trustees, it was provided: "That no part of the said ground lying to the southward of the State House as it is now built be converted into or made use of for erecting any sort of

delphia, John Dunlap, 1782; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, October 16, 1776. Pennsylvania, *Proceedings relative to calling of Conventions of 1776 and 1790*, 137, 296.

⁵ See Act of April 3, 1799 in *Statutes at Large of Pennsylvania, 1682-1801* 16: 239-241, Harrisburg, C. E. Auginbauch, 1911 (hereafter cited as *Statutes*); *Columbian Magazine* 1: 514.

⁶ During the eighteenth century and the first part of the nineteenth century the square was called the "State House Yard" or "State House Garden." Despite the fact that the City Councils passed an ordinance on May 19, 1825 specifying that the square be called "Independence Square," the new name was not in popular use for many years.

⁷ Browning, Charles H., The State House Yard, and who owned it first after William Penn, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 40: 85-86, 1916.

⁸ Deed Book F, No. 5, 266-269 [City Hall, Phila.].

⁹ *Votes* 3: 2163.



FIG. 1. "State House Garden," 1798 by William Birch showing the high brick wall along Walnut Street and the great gateway at the southern end of the main walk. Courtesy of Philadelphia Free Library.

buildings thereon, but that the said ground shall be enclosed and remain a public open green and walks forever."¹⁰ This provision has been retained as a guiding principle in the development of the square, save for an occasional deviation.¹¹ On August 9, 1739, the Assembly ordered "that Materials be prepared for encompassing the Ground with a Wall in the ensuing Spring. . . ."¹² Two years later a portion of this wall was taken down and rebuilt, and a shingle cornice was added to carry off the rain water.¹³

The purchase of the remainder of the square was delayed nearly four decades. Finally on May 14, 1762, the Assembly directed that this be done,¹⁴ and by 1769 the balance of the lots had been acquired.¹⁵ In 1770 the Assembly enclosed the whole square with a brick wall seven feet high, pierced at the center of the Walnut Street front by a tall arched gateway with solid wooden doors.¹⁶

¹⁰ *Statutes* 4: 301, Harrisburg, Clarence M. Busch, 1897. This provision was repeated in much the same language in an act of 1762 (*ibid.* 6: 180, Harrisburg, Wm. Stanley Ray, 1898) and in the deed dated June 29, 1818 by which the square and its buildings were sold to the City of Philadelphia by the Commonwealth for \$70,000.

¹¹ If the act were strictly interpreted, the Observatory and Philosophical Hall were contrary to this provision. The only other exception was the new courthouse built in 1866–1867 just south of Congress Hall. Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia 1609–1884* 3: 1824, Phila., L. H. Everts, 1884. This building was subsequently demolished.

¹² *Ibid.* 3: 2501.

¹³ *Ibid.* 3: 2683. The location of this wall is shown on Nicholas Scull's map of Philadelphia, published by Matthew Clarkson and M. Biddle, Phila., 1762.

¹⁴ *Hazard's Register* 5: 116, January–July 1830.

¹⁵ Deed Book I, No. 6, 203–207; 207–212 [City Hall, Phila.].

¹⁶ In 1770 Joseph Fox was paid, "per Order of the Trustees of the State-House," the sum of £1689.14.2 "for Repair and Building the State-House Wall." *Votes* 7: 6561, 1935. A scene depicted by William Birch (see fig. 1) shows the wall and gateway.

At this time the square contained the State House with its wings and wooden sheds, along with a small wooden platform erected in 1768. The last item was constructed at the instigation of the American Philosophical Society for observing the transit of Venus across the sun on June 3, 1769. It is believed that the observatory stood about forty feet south of the east wing of the State House.¹⁷

Although the landscaping of the State House Yard had been long discussed, nothing of consequence appears to have been done in this regard during the Colonial period. Apparently the square was more or less barren with no planned landscaping or system of walks at the time of the American Revolution. Cannon parked within the walls must have been a prominent feature of the yard.¹⁸

With the return of peace, interest was again awakened in improving the grounds. The landscaping was finally begun about 1784 under the direction of Samuel Vaughan, a wealthy Jamaica sugar planter then living in Philadelphia.¹⁹ In addition to the wide central walk of gravel leading from the tower door to the gate in the center of the Walnut Street front and the serpentine walks about the perimeter of the square, the most prominent feature of the plan was the planting of one hundred elm trees presented to the Commonwealth by George Morgan of Princeton, N. J.²⁰ Shortly after the land-

¹⁷ On October 15, 1768, an address of the American Philosophical Society requesting the Province to purchase a suitable telescope in England to observe the transit of Venus was considered by the Assembly. After due consideration the sum of £100 sterling was appropriated. *Ibid.* 7: 6288–6289, 1935. Another address of the American Philosophical Society requesting permission "for erecting an Observatory in the State-House Ground" was presented to the House in the following February and on February 11 the permission was granted together with the sum of £100. *Ibid.* 7: 6356–6357, 6359. Colonel Etting reported that he found the foundations of the building about 1876 "when recently perfecting the sewerage of the Square." He stated that the foundation "appears to have been of circular shape, and was erected about forty feet due west from the rear door of the present Philosophical Hall, and about the same distance south from the wall of the present (eastern) wing." Etting, *Historical account of the Old State House*, 65. No archeological records of this discovery have been found, however, and it will be necessary to carry out an archeological investigation at some future date.

¹⁸ A return for the iron guns in Philadelphia in November 1775 found in the State Records Office, Harrisburg, lists eleven cannon in store on the west side and east side of the State House and fifty-two cannon in the State House Yard. Revolutionary Papers 1a: 57.

¹⁹ Stetson, Sarah P., The Philadelphia sojourn of Samuel Vaughan, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 73: 459–474, 1949. It is clear that the planting was done in the spring of 1785 for Jacob Hiltzheimer recorded in his diary on April 23 that he "Went to the State House yard to look at the rows of trees Samuel Vaughan donated, and is directing the planting of."

²⁰ Poulson's *Daily American Advertiser* of May 22, 1819 published a letter of Governor John Dickinson to George Morgan, dated April 22, 1785, expressing the appreciation of the Council for the gift of the trees.



FIG. 2. View of Independence Square from the State House steeple, 1838. Lithograph by J. C. Wild. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

scaping was completed, the Reverend Manasseh Cutler visited the square and described it in his journal:

We passed through this broad aisle into the Mall. It is small, nearly square, and I believe does not contain more than one acre. As you enter the Mall though the State House, which is the only avenue to it, it appears to be nothing more than a large inner Court-yard to the State House, ornamented with trees and walks. But here is a fine display of rural fancy and elegance. It was so lately laid out in its present form that it has not assumed that air of grandeur which time will give it. The trees are yet small, but most judiciously arranged. The artificial mounds of earth, and depressions, and small groves in the squares have a most delightful effect. The numerous walks are well graveled and rolled hard; they are all in a serpentine direction, which heightens the beauty, and affords constant variety. That painful sameness, commonly to be met with in garden-alleys, and other works of this kind, is happily avoided here, for there are no two parts of the Mall that are alike. Hogarth's "Line of Beauty" is here completely verified. The public are indebted to the fertile fancy and taste of Mr. Sam'l Vaughan, Esq., for the elegance of this plan. It was laid out and executed under his direction about three years ago.²¹

²¹Cutler, William Parker and Julia Perkins Cutler, *Life, journals and correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler, LL.D. by his grandchildren* 1: 262-263, Cincinnati, R. Clarke & Co.,

The next "improvement" to the State House Garden following Vaughan's landscaping was undertaken in 1811. In that year, when the old wing buildings were demolished to be replaced by "modern" office buildings, the high brick walls were removed to allow a "freer circulation of air."²² In their place was erected in the following year a low brick wall, about three feet high,

1888. An English visitor to Philadelphia stated that the State House Garden was "the pleasantest walk at Philadelphia," and that it was "something like Kensington Gardens, but not so large." Wansey, Henry, *Excursion to the United States of North America . . . 1794*, 131, Salisbury, England, J. Easton, 1796.

²²The authority for the City of Philadelphia to remove the east and west walls to within three feet of the pavement and to erect "palisades of iron" was enacted by the Legislature in September 1791. The reasons stated for this action was that "it would contribute to the embellishment of the public walks in the state-house garden, and may conduce to the health of the citizens, by admitting a freer circulation of air. . . ." *Statutes* 14: 164, Harrisburg, Harrisburg Pub. Co., 1909. Nothing appears to have been done under this act until August 8, 1811 when City Council passed an ordinance naming commissioners to carry out the project. *The Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia*, 254, Phila., Moses Thomas, 1812. On March 10, 1812, the Legislature authorized the removal of the south wall under the same conditions.

with a marble coping surmounted by a railing of plain iron palisades. Access to the yard was provided by a large gate on Walnut Street and smaller ones on Fifth and Sixth Streets, about halfway between Chestnut and Walnut Streets.²³

About 1876 this second wall was removed. A low wall of granite, with an ornamental coping of marble, was placed around the sides; broad steps were constructed in the center of the Walnut Street front and at the corners on Fifth and Sixth Streets. Wide flagstone walks were laid through the grounds in almost every direction from street to street.²⁴ The later addition of steps on Fifth and Sixth Streets, near Chestnut, substantially established the condition of the square as it is today.

The square through the years has served varied purposes. It was frequently the scene of mass meetings and public demonstrations. Large gatherings met here frequently in the course of the critical days before and during the early part of the Revolution.²⁵ The most noteworthy of these occurred on July 8, 1776, when Colonel John Nixon—from the observatory platform described above—read publicly for the first time that document since known as the Declaration of Independence.²⁶

THE PROVINCIAL STATE HOUSE

1. ERECTION OF THE STATE HOUSE

Prior to the construction of the State House, the Provincial government had no official building. The small unicameral legislature of the Province met usually in private dwellings rented annually for the purpose, or occasionally in the City Hall at Second and High (now Market) Streets.²⁷ The desirability of a permanent

²³ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 3: 1795.

²⁴ *Ibid.* 3: 1795-1796.

²⁵ On October 5, 1765, a mass meeting of the citizens of Philadelphia to protest against the Stamp Act was held in the square. *Ibid.* 3: 1796. Other meetings followed this demonstration until December 27, 1773 when an estimated 8,000 persons assembled upon learning that the ship "Polly" was bringing a cargo of tea to Philadelphia. At this meeting it was decided that the tea would not be landed and that it should be returned to England. *Pennsylvania Packet*, January 3, 1774. With the outbreak of hostilities, the number of meetings increased. An incomplete listing shows meetings in the State House Yard on June 9, 1774 (*ibid.*, June 13, 1774); June 18, 1774 (*ibid.*, June 20, 1774), April 25, 1775 (Duane, William, ed., *Extracts . . . Diary of Christopher Marshall*, 17, Albany, Joel Munsel, 1877; May 20, 1776 (*ibid.*, 72-73), November 28, 1776 (*Penna. Archives*, 1st ser.) 5: 77, Phila., Joseph Severns, 1853, and on September 25, 1777 (Biddle, Henry D., ed., *Extracts from the journal of Elizabeth Drinker*, 52, Phila., Lippincott, 1889).

²⁶ Duane, ed., *op. cit.*, 83.

²⁷ Speaker Hamilton in his "Remonstrance" of January 18, 1733/34 speaks of the Assembly being "Obliged annually to hire some Private House to meet and sit in." *Votes* 3: 2213. Early in the eighteenth century the Assembly held some of its sessions in the City Hall and the Governor received the Assembly here in other years. *Ibid.* 2: 1036, 1931. The 1686 session of the Assembly met in the so-called Bank Meeting House located on Front Street above Arch. *Ibid.* 1: 71-77, 1931; *Colonial*

government building was probably brought to the attention of the citizens of Philadelphia when, on October 16, 1728, the Assembly passed a resolution requesting the Governor and Council to consider the possibility of the Assembly's moving from Philadelphia because of the "indecentcies" to which its members were subjected by "rude and disorderly Persons."²⁸ For in February 1728/9 the citizens of the city and county of Philadelphia petitioned the Assembly to provide for building a market and state house on High Street near the prison, at Third Street. Although the petition was laid on the table by the Assembly, it showed recognition of the need for a government building.²⁹

Apparently, everyone agreed that a building was desirable, but funds were unavailable. However, another movement, completely unrelated to the building program fulfilled this want. This movement was engendered by the determination of the Assembly to overcome the shortage of paper money in the Province.³⁰ The two unrelated projects were brought together on May 1, 1729. On that day the Assembly was considering "the necessity of a House for the Assembly." It was suggested that £2,000 of the £30,000 of paper money proposed for issue be "appropriated for Building the said House." The motion was passed unanimously.³¹ The money act, passed May 10, 1729, authorized the printing of £30,000 in bills of credit, of which £26,000 were to be lent on land security for sixteen years at five per cent interest. In this act, £2000 of the total issue were appropriated towards the building of "a house for the representatives of the freemen of this province to meet and sit in general assembly in the city of Philadelphia. . . ." The two thousand pounds were to be sunk by annually destroying two hundred pounds of the paper money received in payment of interest on the £26,000 on loan.³²

Records, Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania 1: 132-141, Phila., Jo. Severns & Co., 1852. See also *ibid.* 1: 92, 178 and 2: 26, 364-365, 1852; *Votes* 1: 128, 176, 186, 276, 528, 552 and 3: 1978, 2125-2126; *Governors' Papers, Penna. Archives* (4th ser.) 1: 452-453, Harrisburg, Wm. Stanley Ray, 1900, for meeting places of Assembly.

²⁸ *Votes* 3: 1908. Apparently, it was felt that a permanent building would lend dignity to the Assembly and serve to protect its members from rowdism. A state house would also serve to keep the capital in Philadelphia. The Council and the Governor opposed the move for the time being, but stated that a move to Chester might be considered. *Colonial Records* 3: 340, 1852; *Votes* 3: 1909-1910.

²⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 1929.

³⁰ Benjamin Franklin, a young printer of Philadelphia, wrote and published a most effective pamphlet entitled *A Modest Enquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency*. Smyth, Albert Henry, *The writings of Benjamin Franklin* 2: 133-155, N. Y., Macmillan, 1905; Van Doren, Carl, *Benjamin Franklin*, 101-102, N. Y., Viking, 1938.

³¹ *Votes* 3: 1950.

³² *Statutes* 4: 98-116. Mr. Reeder, in his scholarly study of the Independence Hall group of buildings, states that the two thousand pounds provided only a small portion of the total cost of buying the site and erecting the State House. It did, how-

This act of 1729 also named a committee, consisting of Andrew Hamilton and Dr. John Kearsley from the Assembly and Thomas Lawrence from the Council, to carry on the building.³³ Strong disagreement soon arose between Hamilton and Kearsley. The former presented a plan and elevation of a building which "was compared with several other Plans and Elevations, one or more produced by one of the Gentlemen joined in the said Undertaking. . . ." After the committee had agreed on the plan sponsored by him, Hamilton proceeded, with Lawrence's advice, to obtain materials for the building.³⁴ Kearsley's opposition continued, however, until Hamilton (Speaker of the Assembly) brought the entire matter to the attention of the House on August 8, 1732. In his address to that body, Hamilton stated that "John Kearsley had opposed the Work both on account of the Place where it is built, and of the Manner and Form of the Building, and had frequently insisted, that the House of Representatives had never agreed it should be erected in that Place. . . ." He asked "to know the Sentiments of the House thereupon. . . ." Dr. Kearsley then arose and "offered to the House his Reasons and Allegations touching the premises, which were fully heard. . . ." Whereupon the House resolved itself "into a Committee of the Whole House" so Hamilton could answer.³⁵ Unfortunately, there is no record of this debate. But the matter was finally settled on August 14 when the Assembly, siding with Hamilton, selected the south side

ever, establish a precedent as to the manner of securing funds for the purpose. The reports of the trustees of the General Loan Office showed that during the many years in which the building was under construction, the necessary funds were obtained almost exclusively from interest loaned in bills of credit. Reeder, Robert P., *The first homes of the Supreme Court of the United States*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 76: 536, 1936.

³³ Andrew Hamilton's abilities as a lawyer brought him many public offices in Pennsylvania. For twelve years, beginning in 1727, he represented Bucks County in the Assembly and from 1729, except for one session, was its speaker. His chief claim to fame was his successful defense of John Peter Zenger, a New York publisher, against a charge of seditious libel. His defense greatly strengthened the principle of freedom of the press. Spencer, Charles Worthen, Andrew Hamilton, *Dict. Amer. Biog.* 8: 181-182, N. Y., Charles Scribner, 1932. Dr. John Kearsley was a prominent physician of Philadelphia. He represented that city in the Assembly for many years. The design of Christ Church and of St. Peter's Church has often been attributed to him. Jacob, Arthur C., John Kearsley, *ibid.* 10: 274, 1933. Thomas Lawrence was mayor of Philadelphia in 1727 and again in 1734. He served as a member of the Governor's council from about 1728 until his death. Watson's *Annals* 3: 87, Phila., Leary, Stuart Co., 1927; *Colonial Records* 3: 303 and 5: 736, Harrisburg, 1851.

³⁴ Hamilton's "Remonstrance," dated January 18, 1733/4, is in *Votes* 3: 2213-2214. In this paper, Hamilton recited the history of the difficulties in building the State House, and asked to be discharged from his responsibilities. The Assembly refused to release him.

³⁵ *Ibid.* 3: 2144. Unfortunately the records do not present Kearsley's side of the dispute, nor has a copy of the plan sponsored by him been found.

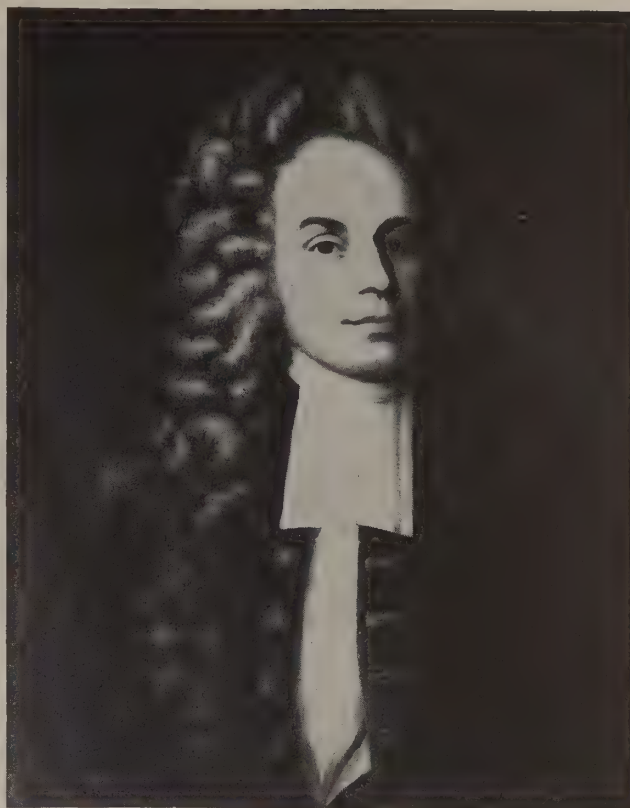


FIG. 3. Andrew Hamilton, an eminent lawyer and Speaker of the Assembly, superintended the building of the State House. From a portrait copied by Adolf Wertmüller (1751-1811) from an original now lost. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

of Chestnut Street between Fifth and Sixth Streets, on the outskirts of the city, as the site.³⁶

In the course of the debate, Hamilton, on August 11, "produced a Draught of the State-House, containing the Plan and Elevation of that Building; which being viewed and examined by the several Members, was approved of by the House."³⁷ Apparently the ground was broken for the erection of the building shortly after the adoption of the plan,³⁸ and Hamilton was named to supervise its construction "with the Advice of the two Gentlemen before nominated."³⁹

Because of his prominence in the erection of the State House, Andrew Hamilton has usually been called its architect. Even the parchment plan of the main building (bearing the date 1732 and found about 1890 in the papers of John Dickinson) has long been attributed to

³⁶ The resolution of the Assembly stated, "That Mr. Speaker, both in regard of the Place whereon the Building of the State-house is fix'd, and of his Manner of conducting the same Building, hath behaved himself agreeable to the Mind and Intention of this House." *Ibid.* 3: 2156-2157.

³⁷ *Ibid.* 3: 2154.

³⁸ In his "Remonstrance," Hamilton stated that after the ground was purchased "nothing further was done towards buildings the said House, till the Year 1732. . . ." *Ibid.* 3: 2213.

³⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 2154.

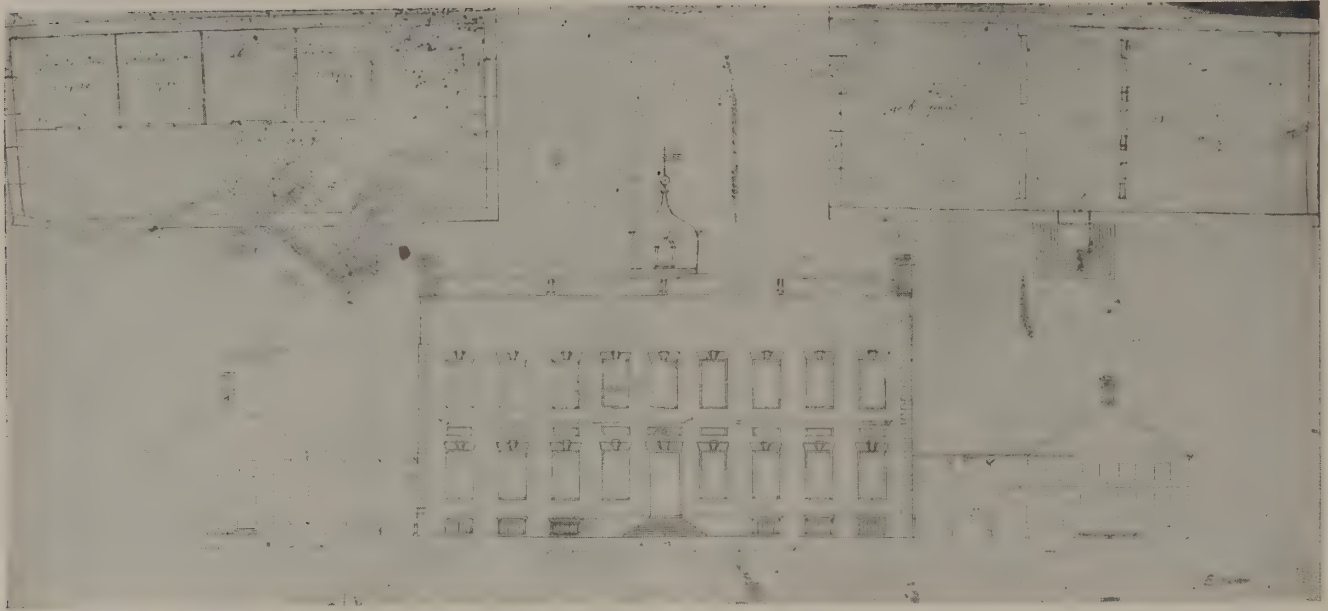


FIG. 4. Plan of State House (1732), found about 1890 in the papers of John Dickinson, has often been attributed to Andrew Hamilton. The elevation, below the floor plan, shows the main building substantially as it was first erected. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

1735 The Honourable John Penn Esquire
 To drawing the Elevation of the Front one
 End the Roof Balconey Chimneys and Torret
 of the State House With the fronts and Plans of
 the two offices and Piarses also the Plans
 of the first and second floors of the State House
 £ Edmund Woolley £ 5¹¹ 0¹¹ 0
 Paid the 22 of July 1736 of James that the above mentioned
 five Pounds
 J^r me Edmund Woolley

FIG. 5. Account of Edmund Woolley with Governor John Penn for floor plans and elevation drawings of the State House, 1735-1736. Penn Manuscripts, Hist. Soc. of Penna.

him without adequate substantiation.⁴⁰ The drawing is certainly a very early plan of the edifice and may conceivably have been the one sponsored by Hamilton and approved by the Assembly on August 11, 1732. The document is unsigned, however, and the draftsman has not been identified.

Although it is undoubtedly true that Hamilton as superintendent of its construction had much to do with the form of the building, one may question whether he was the actual architect. In fact, there is documentary evidence which would bestow that title on Edmund Woolley, master carpenter. For in 1736 the latter received five pounds for "drawing the Elevation of the Frount one End the Roof Balconey Chimneys and Turret of the State House With the fronts and Plans of the Two offiscis And Piazzas Allso the Plans of the first and Second floors of the State House."⁴¹ It is apparent, therefore, that Woolley prepared the drawings from which the State House was constructed.

In addition, Edmund Woolley and Ebenezer Tomlinson are mentioned repeatedly in the records as the carpenters employed in building the State House. In August 1732 Hamilton stated that he had attempted to employ workmen as cheaply as possible, but the carpenters "allegding the Work expected from them was heavy, and to be carried on in an extraordinary Manner insisted on the Price of *Thirty Shilling per Square*. . . ." He would not pay them at this rate without the approval of the Assembly. A committee was named to confer with the carpenters. Upon receiving their report, the Assembly agreed that the price should be thirty shillings per square.⁴² On January 30, 1734/5 a petition of Edmund Woolley requesting a clarification of this action was considered. He wished to know "the Species of Work" he and Tomlinson were to perform at this rate. He was told that it included "the Floors,

Outside Windows, Doors, Roof and Eves, Turret, Balcony, and the Stairs."⁴³

A year later Woolley and Tomlinson reported to the Assembly that they had "almost finished that Part of the State-house, which they undertook to perform. . . ." That body then ordered that the inside be plastered, "a proper Cornish round the Room next the Cieling, and a Surbase below."⁴⁴

The building of the State House was a slow process. The Assembly was not able to meet in the new building until September 1735.⁴⁵ At that time the walls were not paneled and the windows were not glazed.⁴⁶ Difficulties of various types, especially the scarcity of skilled workmen, kept the building in an unfinished state. Finally, in the summer of 1741, the impatient Assembly ordered that the walls and windows of their chamber be finished at once and the remainder of the building completed without undue delay.⁴⁷ Despite this order,

⁴³ *Ibid.* 3: 2245.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 3: 2337. In 1740 Woolley and Tomlinson requested permission of the Assembly "to be excused from doing any more of the Work of the State-house, and that what they have done may be measured, that they may be enabled to settle their Accounts. . . ." The Assembly granted them the permission. *Ibid.* 3: 2604-2605. Unfortunately, little is known of Woolley. On July 13, 1705 he was admitted a freeman by the Common Council by the payment of £1.12.6. *Minutes of the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia, 1704-1776*, 25, Phila., Crissey and Markley, 1847. The Council on the following December 29 ordered that an ordinance be prepared "for restraining those that are not admitted freemen of this City to keep open Shops, or to master Workmen. . . ." *Ibid.*, 34. In Woolley's will, written in 1760 and probated October 18, 1771, his home on Second Street was devised to his son Stephen. The remainder of his rather extensive properties was divided among his son and his daughters, Mary and Sarah. A burial plot on his land on Magazine Street in the Northern Liberties was set aside for the use of his family. His library, "except the Books of Architecture," was left to Stephen. His architectural books and carpenter's tools were to be sold and the money divided between his daughters. The will was witnessed by Joseph Galloway, Benjamin Bayton, and Nicholas Waln. Will Book P, 152-157, City Hall, Phila. Also, see payments to Woolley and Tomlinson for work on the State House in *Votes* 3: 2233, 2264-2265.

⁴⁵ After the lots on Chestnut Street were acquired for the construction of the State House, the Assembly met in one of the houses standing on one of the lots. On June 24, 1735 the Assembly, "Ordered, That the two old houses opposite to the State House (the one being the house where the Assembly now sits) be demolished, and the materials thereof disposed of to the best advantage; and then the House adjourned to the fifteenth of September next." *Ibid.* 3: 2274.

⁴⁶ The Assembly directed, on January 25, 1734/5, that their room be wainscoted. *Ibid.* 3: 2257. In the following year, on February 18, it was decided that wainscoting was too expensive at that time; they decided "That the Inside of the said Building be finished with good plastering, a proper Cornish round the Room next the Cieling, and a Surbase below." *Ibid.* 3: 2337-2338. It has not been determined when the Assembly room was paneled. Glass was not put in the windows because of the danger of breakage. *Ibid.* 3: 2682.

⁴⁷ On June 4, 1741, the Assembly named a committee, consisting of Edward Warner, Mark Watson, and William Hewes, "to enquire into the Causes of the said Delay." *Ibid.* 3: 2680.

⁴⁰ This plan is in the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁴¹ Penn Manuscripts, Accounts 1: 32, Hist. Soc. of Penna. As early as 1906 this receipt (fig. 5) was published without comment in the *Penna. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.* 30: 507, 1906, and four years later was republished in the same magazine (*ibid.* 34: 498, 1910) with the query: "Who was the architect of the State House, Andrew Hamilton or Edmund Woolley?" The late Horace Wells Sellers, who served for many years on the committee of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects advising the city government on the restoration of the Independence Hall group of buildings, made a most exhaustive search of available records and reached the conclusion that Woolley was the architect of the State House rather than Hamilton. Although Sellers was quoted on this matter in several newspaper accounts, his "resurrection" of Woolley appears to have been little noted. Mr. Harold Donaldson Eberlein, however, does refer to Woolley as the "architect-builder" of the State House. Eberlein, Harold Donaldson, and Cortlandt Van Dyke Hubbard, *Diary of Independence Hall*, 35-36, Phila., Lippincott, ca. 1948.

⁴² *Votes* 3: 2154-2155. "Square" means one hundred square feet.

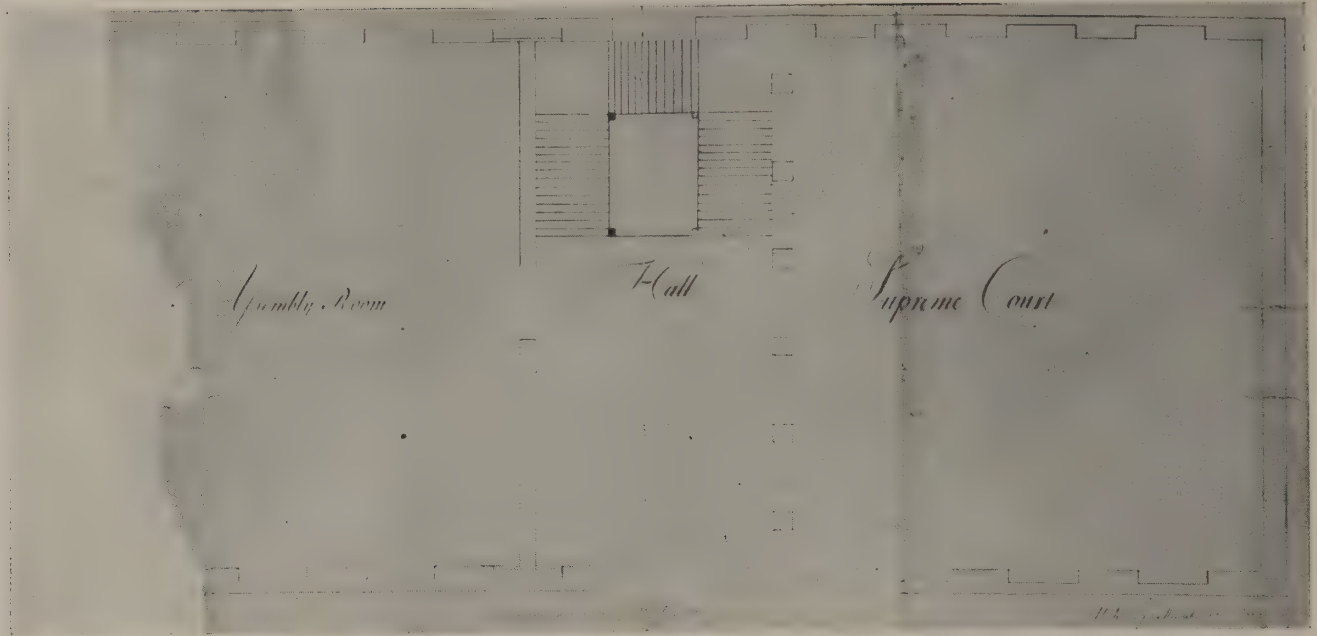


FIG. 6. Very early floor plan of the State House, apparently drawn prior to erection of tower showing the

plans for completing the Supreme Court Chamber were not submitted until November 1743.⁴⁸ The Council Chamber was not ready for occupancy until February 1747/8.⁴⁹ It appears probable that the building was completed at about the latter date.

During the construction of the State House, the old custom of "raising feasts" was followed. Usually when the main timbers in a building had been raised, a feast was given for the workmen in celebration of the event. For the State House and its wings, there were a number of such feasts. For instance, on October 14, 1734, Hannah Powell asked the Assembly for "speedy Payment of the Ballance of her Account, for Victuals, Drink &c, provided for the People employed in the Several Raisings of the State-House. . . ." ⁵⁰ She received the bal-

The Committee discussed the matter with the Manager of the building and reported orally on the next day "that the Carpenters Work however was now finished; that the Sashes even made, and the Glass ready to put in. . . ." It was impossible to procure a plasterer although he had hopes of getting one next spring. *Ibid.* 3: 2682. An unsuccessful attempt was made to obtain two plasterers from England. *Ibid.* 4: 2715-2716. On the next day the committee recommended in writing "that the Assembly-room of the State-house should be plastered, glazed, and finished, all but the Cieling and upper Work, by the next Meeting of the Assembly. And the Cieling and upper Work to be finished as soon a Workman can be got." *Ibid.* 3: 2682-2683. After Hamilton's death, the Assembly named on August 20, 1741 Thomas Leech, Isaac Norris, and Edward Warner "Superintendents" of the State House and ordered them to carry out these recommendations. *Ibid.* 3: 2690.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.* 4: 2909.

⁴⁹ *Colonial Records* 5: 69, 163, Harrisburg, 1851.

⁵⁰ *Votes* 3: 2259. An itemized listing of the large quantities of food and drink consumed at one of these "feasts" may be seen in Edmund Woolley's account with the Province of Pennsylvania, "For expenses in raising the tower [cupola] of the State

ance of her account on March 27, 1735 and it is noted that the entire bill amounted to the sizeable sum of £88.19.1.⁵¹ On the next day Hannah Powell stated she had not charged for "dressing Victuals" at the raisings. The Assembly allowed her the further sum of ten pounds.⁵²

Shortly after the construction of the State House had been started, the Assembly ordered that office buildings be erected as wings to the main building. On March 24, 1732/3, that body resolved, "That for the greater security of the publick Papers of this Province (agreeable to a plan now produced before the House) two Offices be built adjoining to the State House. . . ." The sum of £400 was appropriated for this purpose.⁵³

Early in 1736 the new wing buildings were practically ready for occupancy.⁵⁴ The Assembly intended the offices as "Repositaries for such Records and Papers as more immediately concern the Publick, and particularly those of the Trustees of the General Loan-Office, the Rolls Office for recording Deeds, and the Register General's Office."⁵⁵ Two of these officials, Peter Evans, the Register General, and Charles Brockden, the Recorder of Deeds, were most reluctant to move their offices and protested against an act compelling them to move.⁵⁶ Despite these protests, the act was

House," on November 4, 1741 in Hazard's *Register* 2: 376, 1828-1829.

⁵¹ *Votes* 3: 2265.

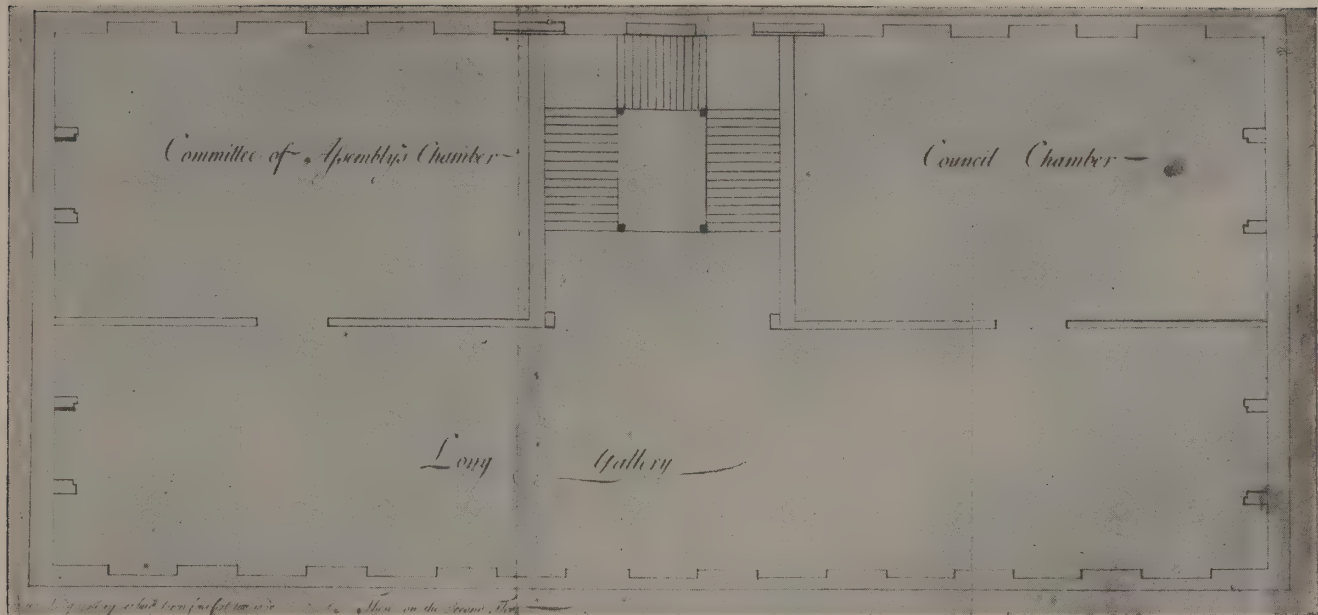
⁵² *Ibid.* 3: 2266.

⁵³ *Ibid.* 3: 2171-2172.

⁵⁴ On January 15, 1735/6, John Kinsey in moving that an act be passed compelling the officers to move to the new offices, stated that they "are almost compleated. . . ." *Ibid.* 3: 2298.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ In his memorial to the Assembly, Mr. Evans offered to



interior stairway in south end of hallway. In Penn Manuscripts, Warrants and Surveys, Hist. Soc. of Penna.

passed by the Assembly, only to fail because of the opposition of the Governor and Council.⁵⁷

Despite the failure of the act compelling their removal to the new offices, the various county and provincial officials occupied the wings voluntarily within a few years.⁵⁸ The wings were located a short distance from the east and west walls of the State House and were connected to it by arcades or "piazzas." Each arcade

build at his own expense "a strong Brick Room near the Market-place, apart from other Buildings, arched with Brick and covered with Tile or Slate. . . ." *Ibid.* 3: 2306. Brockden's protest can be found in *ibid.* 3: 2318.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* 3: 2324-2325, 2336; *Colonial Records* 4: 17, 21, 1851. The Assembly attempted to pass a similar bill in 1742 without success. *Votes* 4: 2750, 2751.

⁵⁸ Because of the lack of definite information, it is impossible to determine the interior arrangement of the wing buildings or their occupants. The following notes summarize the available information. "The lower of the West wing has been the Secretary's office from the first building of the State House to this day. . . ." Secretary Matlack to Lewis Nicola, May 1, 1779, in *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 7: 364, 1853. The offices of the Recorder of Deeds, and the office for probating wills were apparently in the east wing. Schoepf, J. D., *Travels in the Confederation* 1: 69, Phila., W. J. Campbell, 1911. The prothonotary of the Supreme Court moved into one of the wings around 1750. *Votes* 4: 3364. During the Confederation period the War Office was located in the west wing. Schoepf, *op. cit.* 1: 69. In 1790, in order to make the entire west wing available for the use of the Congress, the Secretary and Receiver General of the Land Office, the family of the Doorkeeper of the Assembly, and the Register-General were given quarters elsewhere. In this same document mention is made of the Comptroller General being in the east wing. *Penna. Archives* (2nd ser.) 16: 486, Harrisburg, E. K. Meyers, 1890. The Register General had opened his office in the west wing only the year before. *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 11: 569, 1855. John Beckley, clerk of the House of Representatives, later said that the Doorkeeper's family would not be compelled to move. *Ibid.* 11: 739.

contained a stairway leading to the second floor of the wings. The archways of the arcade were closed on the south sides by solid brick walls.⁵⁹

County and provincial officials were not the only ones to occupy the wing buildings. In 1739 the Library Company of Philadelphia was granted permission to deposit its books in the upper floor of the west wing.⁶⁰ From 1745 until long after the Revolution,⁶¹ also, the Doorkeeper of the Assembly and his family occupied quarters in the west wing. Furthermore, during the early years, Indian delegations were sometimes lodged in one of the wings.

⁵⁹ The plan for the "piazzas" was not approved until November 29, 1743. *Votes* 4: 2909. Although the plans of the wings and arcades have not been found, there are numerous artists' renderings which provide an accurate picture of the exterior arrangements of the wings. William Birch's "State House, in Chestnut Street," plate no. 21, is considered the most detailed and accurate. See Birch, William & Son, *City of Phila. in the State of Penna., N.A., as it appeared in the year, 1800.* (28 pls.), drawn and engraved by W. Birch & Son. Pub. Dec. 31, 1800, Phila.

⁶⁰ *Votes* 3: 2513-2514, 2515. See Benson, Adolph, ed., *Peter Kalm's travels in North America* 1: 25, N. Y., Wilson-Erickson, 1937, for a description of the Library about 1750. The Library Company remained in the west wing until 1773 when it removed to Carpenters' Hall.

⁶¹ A certificate of Mary Burden, dated February 12, 1788, states that her family lived in the west wing from 1745 to 1756 without paying rent, since her husband was Doorkeeper to the Assembly. Society Misc. Coll., Box 9A, Hist. Soc. of Pa. See also *Votes* 5: 4160. In 1788 Joseph Fry, the Doorkeeper, was exonerated from the payment of rent "on account of his occupying of part of the western wing of the state-house, and consuming the herbage of the state-house yard." *Minutes of Assembly of Pa., 1786-1789*, 104, 114, 148, 152, 168, 198, Phila., Hall & Sellers, 1788.

These exotic "tenants" proved a source of worry to the Assembly. Their carelessness with fire posed such a serious threat to public records, that in 1759 the Assembly was forced to consider the matter. On June 13 of that year, the Assembly resolved that "a small House, suitable for the Purpose" be erected "adjoining the Wall of the State-house Yard. . . ." Whether the house was built on the site first selected, to the south of the State House, is not known.⁶² It is believed, however, that one of the two wooden sheds built before the Revolution at the corners of Fifth and Sixth Streets on Chestnut Street was used for this purpose.⁶³

Although the fifteen years required to build the State House must have been a source of irritation to legislators eager to occupy it, the building as completed proved the time well spent. A most ambitious project for that early date,⁶⁴ it emerged a sturdily constructed, brick building with a façade one hundred and seven feet in length connected by arcades, or "piazzas," to wing buildings some fifty feet long. The main building had a decked gabled roof balustraded between the chimneys and surmounted by a centrally located cupola.⁶⁵

⁶² The resolution of the Assembly specifies that the building be erected "on the lot formerly conveyed by Anthony Morris to William Allen, Esq." *Votes* 6: 5009, 1935. This was a Walnut Street lot 49½ feet on Walnut Street and extending north 255 feet to the back of the Chestnut Street lots. Deed Book H, 10: 635-638. It is probable that they wanted the building outside the State House Yard. A wall divided the square approximately in half at this time. See Eastburn's map, pub. 1776; for this map see the listing in Phillips, P. L., *Maps and views of Philadelphia* in the Library of Congress, Geological Society, 1926.

⁶³ Although this seems to be a logical use for these structures and tradition says they were so used, no documentary proof of the housing of Indian delegations in the sheds has been found.

⁶⁴ John F. Watson prepared from "the original bills and papers, as kept by Andrew Hamilton, Esq." the following list of workmen employed in building the State House: "Edmund Woolley did the carpenter work, John Harrison the joiner work, Thos. Boude was brick mason, Wm. Holland did the marble work, Thos. Kerr, plasterer, Benjamin Fairman and James Stoope made the bricks; the lime was from the kilns of the Tysons. The 'glass and lead' cost £170, and the glazing in leaden frames was done by *Thomas Godfrey*, the celebrated. The interior brick pavement was made of clay tiles, by Benjamin Fairman." Watson's *Annals* 1: 396. Unfortunately, the records consulted by Watson have not been found, but the names, with exception of Holland, Kerr, Stoope, and Godfrey, are listed in the reports of the committee to settle Hamilton's account. *Votes* 4: 2715-2717, 2766-2768. Other workmen are included in these lists, but none has his occupation or work shown. In addition, Gustavus Hesselius is named as the painter and Thomas Ellis as glazer of the State House. *Ibid.* 4: 2857, 3077. No proof has been found indicating that a brick pavement was laid inside the State House when first built.

⁶⁵ The parchment plan of the State House in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania represents the main building approximately as it was built (see fig. 4). Some confusion has arisen from Peter Kalm's reference to a tower on the State House in his journal written prior to 1750. From his mention of a tower on City Hall in High Street, it is clear that Kalm's "tower" was a "cupola." Benson, *op. cit.* 1: 25-26. It is clear that a turret did exist, for Woolley's account of the work done in

The interior arrangement of the State House provided suitable space for the various agencies of the government. The first floor contained two chambers about forty feet square separated by a spacious center hall about twenty feet in width. The eastern chamber served as the meeting place of the Assembly. Since the Assembly's sessions were usually secret, the room was provided with doors. The western chamber housed the Supreme Court of the Province and was entered through open archways. The staircase to the upper floor occupied the south end of the central hall.⁶⁶ The Provincial Council, the Governor's advisory body, met in a chamber approximately twenty by forty feet in the southwestern corner of the upper floor. This room was separated by a small vestibule or hallway from a similar chamber in the southeastern corner which was designed as a committee room of the Assembly. The entire Chestnut Street frontage was one room, called the "gallery" or "long room," which measured one hundred by twenty feet. The "gallery" was used "generally for public entertainment."⁶⁷

Information concerning the early furnishings used in the Provincial State House is scanty. In fact, there is practically a void for the early years except a notation for £100 paid Thomas Leech in 1742 "towards furnishing the State House."⁶⁸ No enumeration of the articles purchased by Leech has been found. Screens and curtains were ordered for the Assembly room in 1748. Perhaps these items were obtained to aid in subduing the echo in the room which annoyed the members in 1745.⁶⁹ In 1752 a silver inkstand was made for the Speaker's table by Philip Syng at a cost of £25.16,⁷⁰ and

building the tower and committee room, 1750-1756, mentions "pulling down the Old Turret & making good the State house roof where it stood. . . ." Miscellaneous accounts, General Loan Office, The Norris Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁶⁶ Although it has been frequently stated that no stairs were provided between the first and second floors of the early State House, stairs are clearly shown at the south end of the hall or vestibule on both the parchment plan dated 1732 (fig. 4) and an early plan (fig. 6) undoubtedly drawn before the erection of the tower. See Warrants and Surveys, folio III, Penn MSS, Hist. Soc. Penna. Furthermore, stairs were listed as part of the work for which Woolley and Tomlinson contracted. *Votes* 3: 2245.

⁶⁷ Duché, Jacob, *Observations on a variety of subjects*, 10, Phila., John Dunlap, 1774. A feast given by Mayor William Allen for the citizens of the city at the State House on September 23, 1736 (*Penna. Gazette*, Sept. 30, 1736) has often been said to have occurred in the "long room." This assumption appears to be erroneous because of the unfinished condition of the building. Probably the feast was held outside the building, or, perhaps, in the more nearly completed Assembly room.

⁶⁸ *Votes* 4: 2808. On August 9, 1733 the Province paid one pound, sixteen shillings for chairs for the use of the Assembly. *Ibid.* 3: 2179.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.* 4: 3233.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.* 4: 3485, 3534. The silver inkstand now on exhibition in Independence Hall bears Syng's mark. It is believed that it is the one purchased in 1752. Col. Frank Etting located the inkstand in 1875 and returned it to the Hall. Etting, *op. cit.*, 168-170.

in the following year a bottom was acquired for the Speaker's chair from Plunket Fleeson.⁷¹

No mention is made of the method of heating the building prior to 1744. In that year iron chimney-backs, valued at £6.1.3, were delivered by William Branson.⁷² Then on January 10, 1772, Lewis Brahl was paid for two stoves and pipes for the Assembly room.⁷³

Lighting the building was not too serious a problem since the meetings rarely continued until darkness. On these occasions, however, the Assembly would order, "That Candles be brought in, and they were brought in accordingly."⁷⁴

Pictorial representation of the interior of the State House during the Colonial period is totally lacking. The Assembly room, to be sure, is depicted in the painting by Pine and Savage, "The Congress Voting Independence," but this painting was executed approximately a decade after the event.⁷⁵

2. CONSTRUCTION OF THE TOWER

A few years after the State House was completed, the Assembly in January 1749/50 authorized the Superintendents of the State House "to carry up a Building on the South-side of the said House to contain the Staircase, with a suitable Place thereon for hanging a Bell."⁷⁶ Edmund Woolley was the master carpenter entrusted with the actual construction of the tower. By March 29, 1753, the brick tower was finished and Woolley began construction of the belfry.⁷⁷ In June 1753 the project was completed and the State House bell was hung.⁷⁸

According to Woolley's accounts, the following work was done in building the tower and repairing the State House:

⁷¹ *Votes* 4: 3618.

⁷² *Ibid.* 4: 3047, 7: 5903.

⁷³ *Ibid.* 8: 6758, 1935.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 4: 3295. No reference has been found to the large crystal chandelier now in the Assembly room.

⁷⁵ Robert Edge Pine actually painted in the Assembly room. An advertisement placed in the *Penna. Packet* for November 15, 1784 by Pine states that he had been provided "with the use of a commodious appartment in the State-house, for the purpose of painting the most illustrious scenes of the late revolution. . . . Attendance will be given at the side door of the Congress chamber. . . ." The Assembly room depicted in the painting is much more simple than the present room; the Ionic order is shown rather than the Doric order now in the room.

⁷⁶ *Votes* 4: 3316.

⁷⁷ In a letter to James Wright dated March 29, 1753, Charles Norris wrote "Ed Woolley this day has begun to raise the Belfry in order to hang the Bell. . . ." *Penna. Mag. of Hist. & Biog.* 39: 464, 1915. The raising feast for the belfry was held before April 17, 1753 for on that date Woolley submitted a bill for £5.13.10 "For sundrys advanced for raising the Bell Frame and putting up the Bell." *Hazard's Register* 2: 376.

⁷⁸ In the *Pennsylvania Packet* of June 7, 1753 appeared the following notice: "Last week was raised and fixed in the state house steeple, the new great bell, cast here by Pass and Stow, weighing 2080 pounds. . . ."



FIG. 7. The completed State House with wings and arcades, 1752. From the *Gentleman's Magazine* for September, 1752, this view is almost identical with the one shown on the Scull and Heap map of Philadelphia of 1750, earliest known view of the State House. Courtesy of Philadelphia Free Library.

To Work done at the State house Vizt. drawing drafts, Bills of Scantling, taking an Account of all the Timber & reducing the same to Superficial Measure, also taking an Account of all the Plank & Boards used for the State house. To making 3 rounds & 3 half round Centers for Windows & doors; Cutting away the Old roof & floor in order to build the tower Wall on the State house wall; making Scaffolds to ye tower in Side & Out, for My Self, Bricklayers Plasterers & Painters; pulling down the Old Turret & making good the State house roof when it stood & a Large dormand between State house & tower Wall, & Shingling against S. wall; altering the Balconey & adding thereto with Stairs leading to State house flat; getting the Bell up & down & up again & twice hanging Bells; Jointing Many thousand of Shingles; making a Scaffold the whole length of the State house, to paint ye Eves, front windows &c. & strikeing ye Same again; Making many drawers & cases for ye Same in ye Loan Office; hanging ye upper front Sashes anew in Long Gallery; Time Spent in attending the Clock makers while fixing ye Clock ye first time, many of the above Articles not now to be Seen.⁷⁹

The bell for the State House was authorized by the Assembly on October 15, 1751.⁸⁰ The Superintendents of the State House acted promptly. On November 1 they requested Robert Charles, the Provincial agent in England, "to get us a good Bell of about two thousand pounds weight. . . ." The Superintendents estimated the cost of the bell to be about one hundred pounds sterling and enclosed a bill of exchange for that amount. The letter closed with the following directions:

Let the Bell be cast by the best Workmen & examined carefully before it is Shipped with the following words well shaped in large letters round it vizt

By order of the Assembly of the Province of Pennsylvania for the State House in the City of Philada 1752 and Underneath

⁷⁹ Edmund Woolley's account with the Province of Pennsylvania, 1750-1756, miscellaneous accounts, General Loan Office, Norris Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna. Samuel Harding did the woodcarving for the stairs and tower. *Votes* 7: 6214, 6216-6217, 1935.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.* 4: 3470.

Proclaim Liberty thro' all the Land to all the Inhabitants thereof—Levit. XXV.10.⁸¹

The bell, cast by Thomas Lester of Whitechapel, England, arrived at Philadelphia in August 1752.⁸² Upon being tested, the bell cracked "by a stroke of the clapper without any other violence as it was hung up to try the sound. . . ." ⁸³

At this critical time, "two Ingenious Work-Men" of Philadelphia offered their services.⁸⁴ Pass, "a Native of the Isle of Malta," and Stow, the son of the door-keeper of the Council, undertook to recast the bell.⁸⁵ But the tone was unsatisfactory, and it was cast again by Pass and Stow in 1753.⁸⁶

This bell was intended to be rung on public occasions such as the times of meeting of the Assembly and the

⁸¹ Isaac Norris, Thomas Leech, and Edward Warner to Robert Charles, November 1, 1751, Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna. Norris was paid £198 "to send for a Bell." *Votes* 4: 3526. The bell received its present name, "Liberty Bell," from the Biblical verse inscribed on it, which begins, "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year. . . ." This was probably intended as a fiftieth anniversary memorial to William Penn's Charter of Privileges of 1701. See Jordan, Wilfred, *The Liberty Bell, American Numismatic Society* 1: 111-112, 1915. The inscription was altered somewhat in the final casting by Pass and Stow.

⁸² On November 8, 1753 Norris wrote Charles authorizing "Lister" to cast another bell to replace the first bell. Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 43. The Whitechapel Bell Foundry, which cast the bell is still in existence. Thomas Lester was taken into partnership with Richard Phelps in 1735. Prior to that time, Lester was foreman of the foundry. When Phelps died in 1735 he left the business, plant, etc. to Lester who died in 1769. A. A. Hughes, President of Whitechapel Bell Foundry, to E. M. Riley, April 7, 1952, Independence National Historical Park Project historical files.

⁸³ I. Norris to R. Charles, March 10, 1753, Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 32-33.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ After the bell cracked, it was decided to send it back to England. Captain Budden, however, could not take it on board. Before recasting the bell, "our Judges" agreed that the old bell was "too high & brittle & cast several little bells out of it to try the sound & strength & fixed upon a mixture of an ounce and a half of copper to a pound of the old Bell & in this proportion we now have it." Norris to Charles, March 10, 1753, *ibid.* 32-33. This is probably the earliest casting of a large bell in English America. Norris, in the same letter, expresses pleasure "that we should first Venture upon and succeed in the greatest Bell cast for ought I know in English America. . . ."

⁸⁶ Norris described the operation to Charles in a letter dated April 14, 1753: ". . . A native of the Isle of Malta & a son of Charles Stow were the persons who undertook to cast our Bell. They made the Mould in a Masterly Manner and run the metal well but upon tryal it seems they added too much copper in the present Bell which is now hung up in its place but they were so teized with the witticisms of the Town that they had a New Mould in great forwardness before Mesnards [a ship captain] arrival & will be very soon ready to make a second essay if this should fail we will embrace Listers offer & send the unfortunate Bell again to him by the first opportunity." Norris to Charles, April 14, 1753, *ibid.*, 39. Pass and Stow were paid £60.13.5. *Votes* 4: 3607. A bill for £5.13.10 was submitted by Woolley on April 17, 1753 for the cost of the food and drink consumed at the feast "for raising the Bell Frame and putting up the Bell." Hazard's *Register* 2: 376.

courts of justice.⁸⁷ Apparently these were not the only uses made of the bell for on September 17, 1772, a petition from "divers Inhabitants of the City of Philadelphia, living near the State-House," was presented to the Assembly complaining of "the too frequent Ringing of the great Bell in the Steeple of State-House. . . ." The petition was laid on the table for further consideration, and appears to have been forgotten.⁸⁸

Having arranged for a bell for the tower, the Assembly ordered in March 1752 that the Superintendents of the State House provide a "large Clock to strike on the Bell, in the Tower of the said Building, within a suitable Dial-plate to show the Hours and Minutes." ⁸⁹ Mr. Stretch, a local clockmaker, was entrusted with its construction and care.⁹⁰ This order was not followed in detail for the clock faces were placed in the eastern and western walls of the building, just below the eaves. The hands were moved by rods connected with the works of the clock. A masonry structure similar to the familiar tall-case clock was constructed under the face of the clock in the western wall.⁹¹ The bell in the steeple was not used to strike the hours; for this purpose there was a second bell, ordered by the Assembly after the first bell had cracked, which was placed in a turret on the roof of the building in front of the tower.⁹²

3. THE COMMITTEE-ROOM

In February 1752, the Assembly directed the Superintendents of the State House to "build a suitable Room,

⁸⁷ See petition of citizens of Philadelphia to the Assembly, September 17, 1772, in *Votes* 8: 6856. On December 2, 1755 the Assembly passed a ruling that all members who were not present one-half hour after "The Assembly Bell ceases to ring, shall pay *One Shilling*." This money was to be paid into the charity box for the use of the "Provincial Hospital." *Votes* 5: 4097-4098, 1931.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.* 8: 6856.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.* 4: 3507.

⁹⁰ The clock was made by Thomas Stretch, son of Peter Stretch. *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 56: 225, 1932. On September 30, 1759, the Assembly paid Mr. Stretch £494 for making the clock and cleaning and repairing it for six years. *Votes* 6: 5067.

⁹¹ See Birch, *Views of Philadelphia*, "Back of the State House" and *Columbian Magazine* for July 1787 for picture of clock; also, the description of the State House written in 1774, in *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 23: 419, 1899.

⁹² Isaac Norris wrote Robert Charles on November 8, 1753, that he did not like Pass and Stow's bell and if Lester would cast a new one for two pence a pound for recasting, the metal of the present bell would be returned at the first opportunity. Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 43. This was not done, however, for on August 13, 1754, "The Speaker, in Behalf of the Superintendents of the State-house, desired the Opinion of the House whether they should send the old Bell to England, in Part Pay for the new One they had purchased (as they had a Right to do by their Agreement) or keep them both for public Use." It was decided that they pay for the new bell and "keep the Old One for such Uses as this House may hereafter appoint." *Votes* 5: 3729. This bell probably cost £170 as shown in the accounts dated August 7, 1754. *Ibid.* 5: 3735. Birch's *Views of Philadelphia*, "Back of the State House," shows the turret for the clock bell (see pl. 22).

adjoining to the *South-East* Corner of said Building, for the Accommodation of the Committee of this House."⁹³ Work apparently began soon after the passage of this order. Edmund Woolley was the master carpenter on this project under the supervision of Thomas Leech, one of the Superintendents of the State House.⁹⁴ Apparently the room was completed in 1753.⁹⁵

This addition also served as the library of the Assembly. The published *Votes of the Assembly* make frequent mention of books and maps ordered for their library.⁹⁶ For example, a set of the English statutes was purchased; and in 1752 Speaker Isaac Norris was directed to order additional new books for which he paid £70 sterling.⁹⁷ On January 16, 1753, the Assembly directed the Speaker and Benjamin Franklin to procure such books and maps as were suitable and necessary for the use of the House.⁹⁸

With the completion of the committee room and library, no additional structures were erected in the State House grounds during the Colonial period. It is true, however, that other buildings were contemplated. On February 20, 1735/6, the Assembly passed a resolution reserving the lots on Chestnut Street at the corners of Fifth and Sixth Streets for the erection of a City Hall and a County Courthouse within the next twenty years.⁹⁹ But these buildings were not erected until several years after the Revolution.

⁹³ *Votes* 4: 3491.

⁹⁴ "To building ye Committee room together with the Book-cases, table, the Entry & all other Wood Work as it now stands." Edmund Woolley, Account with the Province of Pennsylvania, 1750-1756, Misc. Accts., General Loan Office, Norris Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna. On September 24, 1767 the Assembly postponed the adjustment of the accounts of the tradesmen employed in building the room since the "Representation of Thomas Leech, deceased, who superintended that Business, being absent beyond Sea. . . ." *Votes* 7: 6053.

⁹⁵ On March 10, 1753, Norris wrote that the room was "near finished," and again on March 27, he mentioned that the plastering of the room would begin on the next day and if the glass arrives from England it will be "finished against the nex[t] sitting of the Assembly Abt the Middle of May." He acknowledged receipt of the glass on February 3 in his letter of April 14, 1753. Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁹⁶ See, for example, *Votes* 4: 3607.

⁹⁷ "The Assembly last year at my request ordered the purchase of a parcel of law books for their use." Norris to Charles, March 10, 1753, Norris Letterbook, 1719-1756, Hist. Soc. Penna., 32.

⁹⁸ *Votes* 4: 3543. Charles Norris, the brother of Isaac Norris, offered to serve as librarian and on December 24, 1754 he was named "Keeper of the Assembly." *Ibid.* 5: 3801. On October 16, 1772 a committee was named "to procure a Catalogue, to be taken of all the Books in the Assembly Library, to number the same, and place them in proper Order." *Ibid.* 8: 6901, 6908. The room also served as a depository of some of the records of the Province. See *ibid.* 6: 5269-5270, 5283-5284; 7: 6058, 6072.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 2355-2356. The lots had not been transferred to the ownership of the Province at the time of the passage of this act.

At the close of the Colonial period, the State House of the Province of Pennsylvania was one of the best known structures in America. Fortunately there has been preserved a most graphic description of the buildings and its wings written in 1774:

The State House is situated on the one side of the City Squares, the front of which lies to the North is bounded by Chestnut Street; the wall on the South by Walnut Street; the wing on the East by Fifth Street and on the West by Sixth Street, and fronts the North. It stands about twenty five or thirty feet from the street. It is a large handsome building, two stories high, extending in front one hundred feet. On each side is a wing which joins the main building by means of a brick arcade—each of these wings is fifty feet in length. In the West wing was formerly deposited a valuable collection of books belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia, but it is now removed to the Carpenter's Hall. In the lower story of this wing, the keeper of the house lives with a salary of about £20 per annum and house rent free. In the East wing are deposited the Rolls of the Province, and in the second story, the Indians make their abode when in town. These wings are arched with brick, that there can be no damage in case of fire.

The State House is adorned on ye outside with rustic corners and marble pannels, between the two stories. At your entering, you rise a flight of five steps into the entry. To the West is a large room in which the Supreme Court is held, and another on the East, in which the Assembly meet. The first of these rooms is ornamented with a breast-work and a cornish supported by fluted pilasters of the Doric order. This is open to the entry only by the entering of three arches supported by fluted pilasters of the same order. The Assembly room is finished in a neat but not elegant manner. From this room you go through a back door into the Assembly's library, which is a very elegant apartment. It is ornamented with a stucco ceiling, and chimney places. Round the room are glass cases, in which the books are deposited. These books consist of all the laws of England made in these later years, and besides these history and poetry. The Assembly only have recourse to this library. There is likewise deposited a most beautiful bust in wax of Thomas Penn Esqr, one of the Proprietors of the Province, which was sent as a present to the Assembly by the Lady Juliana Penn.

From thence you go to the entry which leads to the hall. It is the first story and its cornish is supported by sixteen fluted pilasters of the Doric order. In the hall is an elegant staircase which leads up to the second story, and at the head of these stairs is another hall or entry. In the room towards the East, the small arms of the city are deposited, which consist of between one and two thousand pieces, all placed in a regular manner. The room towards the West is called the Council Chamber, because it is appropriated to the Governor and Council. You then proceed into what is called the Long Room which runs the whole length of the house and has a fire place at each end. Along the ceiling there is a stucco cornish.

In the hall is a handsome staircase which leads up to the third story of the steeple, and cock-loft of the house, which extends the whole length and breadth of the building. In the middle of this large affair is an apartment in which the Town Clock stands, from whence to the East and West a large prong of iron runs through the gable ends of the house, on which the hands are fixed. The outsides of the two clocks are adorned with handsome faces. You then arrive at the third story of the steeple, in which there is nothing remarkable, and then proceed to the fourth story by another flight of stairs. On the top of the building is a



FIG. 8. Congress Voting Independence, July 4, 1776. Painting begun by Robert E. Pine *ca.* 1784 and completed after his death by Edward Savage. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

platform surrounded on the East and West by a balustrade and on the North and South by a pallisade. From the fourth story of the steeple is a door and a handsome flight of stairs which lead up to the platform. Opposite these steps is a leaden canopy, under this the bell, on which the clock strikes, is placed. The striking of this clock can be heard at any part of the city. The other part of the steeple being entirely of wood is in such a ruinous condition that they are afraid to ring the bell, lest by so doing the steeple should fall down. But this inconvenience the Honourable House of Assembly took into consideration the last Session and appointed a Committee to treat with some ingenious persons to build a new one and also to lay before them at their next sitting an elegant plan of the same. The present building is more like a tower than a steeple, and about one hundred and twenty feet high.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 23: 417-419, 1899. The ruinous condition of the wooden part of the steeple is amply corroborated. Jacob Duché in 1774 wrote: "Behind and adjoining to the State House was sometime since erected a tower, of such miserable architecture, that the Legislature have wisely determined to let it go to decay (the upper part being entirely of wood) that it may hereafter be built upon a new and more elegant construction." Duché, *op. cit.*, 12. The Assembly repeatedly considered its condition from February 25, 1773 to

THE STATE HOUSE AND INDEPENDENCE

The State House was destined to become even more prominent during the American Revolution. Events changed its character from a provincial to a national house. Philadelphia, the metropolis of English America, was located near the geographical center of the thirteen colonies. It was, therefore, the logical meeting place for the delegates of these colonies. The first Continental Congress, which convened in Philadelphia in September 1774 to protest against Britain's policies, was

October 1774 when they ordered it removed. *Votes* 8: 7084, 7154. On March 18, 1775 a proposal was received from Robert Smith to remove the wooden and brick part down to the eaves of the State House and erect a cupola on the roof of the State House. Consideration of the proposal was postponed until the next session. *Ibid.* 8: 7220-7221. Nothing was done about removing the steeple for several years. The author's statement, "that they are afraid to ring the bell," when considered with the other information, casts some doubt on the tradition that the State House bell rang on July 8, 1776. It is that bells in Philadelphia rang during the public celebration, but it is possible that the State House bell was silent. John Adams to Samuel Chase, July 9, 1776, in Burnett, *Letters* 2: 8.

offered the use of the State House, but this offer was refused in favor of Carpenters' Hall.¹⁰¹ On May 10, 1775, the Second Continental Congress met in the Assembly room in the State House.¹⁰² This body, forced by events, moved from protest to resistance. In view of the fact that warfare had broken out in Massachusetts, the Congress in June chose Colonel George Washington to be General and Commander in Chief of the Army.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Politics played some part in the selection. Joseph Galloway, Speaker of the Assembly, was a conservative while the majority of the delegates were of a more radical persuasion. Silas Deane wrote to Mrs. Deane on September 1: "The City has offered us the Carpenter's Hall, so called, to meet in, and Mr. Galloway offers the State House and insists on our meeting there, which he says he has a right to offer as Speaker of that House. The last is evidently the best place, but as he offers, the other party oppose. . . ." Burnett, *Letters* 1: 4. On September 5, Joseph Galloway wrote to Governor William Franklin of New Jersey: "The Congress this day met at Carpenter's Hall, notwithstanding the offer of the Assembly Room a much more proper Place. They next proceeded to chuse a Secretary, and, to my Surprise, Charles Thomson was unanimously elected. The New Yorkers and myself and a few others, finding a great Majority, did not think it prudent to oppose it. Both of these Measures, it seems were privately settled by an Interest made out of Doors." *Ibid.* 1: 9.

Other considerations in the selection of Carpenters' Hall for the first Congress were convenience and especially the presence of an excellent library. John Adams wrote in his diary: "At ten the delegates all met at the City Tavern, and walked to the Carpenters' Hall, where they took a view of the room, and of the chamber where there is an excellent library; there is also a long entry where gentlemen may walk, and a convenient chamber opposite to the library. The general cry was, that this was a good room, and the question was put, whether we were satisfied with this room? and it passed in the affirmative." Adams, Charles F., ed., *The works of John Adams* 2 (Diary): 355, Boston, Little and Brown, 1850. See also Burnett, *Letters* 1: 4-22. Although the Congress chose Carpenters' Hall for their meetings, they did accept two invitations for entertainment at the State House. On September 16, 1774 the members and the citizens of Philadelphia, totaling about 500 persons, had "a grand entertainment at the State House" with "plenty of every thing eatable and drinkable, and no scarcity of good humor and diversion." Silas Deane to Mrs. Deane, September 12, 1774 in Burnett, *Letters* 1: 32; also in Parsons, Jacob C., ed., *Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer*, 32, Phila., Wm. F. Fell, 1893; *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 19, 1774. In October the Assembly ordered another entertainment at the State House for the delegates. Dr. Solomon Drowne to Dr. William Bowen, October 19, 1774, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 48: 235, 1924.

¹⁰² Burnett, *Letters* 1: *passim*; Duane, *op. cit.*, 11, 22-28, 76, 107, 117.

¹⁰³ Burnett, *Letters* 1: 124, 126-127, 129, 130-131, 134, and 138-139. John Adams in his Autobiography describes Washington's nomination in these words: ". . . I had no hesitation to declare that I had but one gentleman in my mind for that important command, and that was a gentleman from Virginia who was among us and very well known to all of us, a gentleman whose skill and experience as an officer, whose independent fortune, great talents, and excellent universal character, would command the approbation of all America, and unite the cordial exertions of all the Colonies better than any other person in the Union. Mr. Washington, who happened to sit near the door, as soon as he heard me allude to him, from his usual modesty, darted into the library-room. . . ." *Ibid.* 1: 131.

While Washington organized the army, Congress organized the civil government. On July 2, 1776, the Congress adopted the resolution, offered by Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, declaring "That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States. . . ." ¹⁰⁴ Two days later the Congress adopted the document largely written by Thomas Jefferson which is now known as the Declaration of Independence.¹⁰⁵ The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, the first framework of government, went into effect in the Assembly room on March 1, 1781.¹⁰⁶ Undoubtedly the two most encouraging events of this period were the formal reception of Gérard, the first French minister to the United States, in 1778, and the official receipt, on October 24, 1781, of news of the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia. About a week later the Congress was presented with twenty-four stands of the captured colors.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 507, Washington, Gov't. Printing Office, 1906; Burnett, *Letters* 1: 525-527. John Adams, writing to his wife on the evening of that day, made this rather interesting statement: ". . . The second day of July, 1776, will be the most memorable epocha in the history of America. I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated by succeeding generations as the great anniversary Festival. It ought to be commemorated, as the day of deliverance, by solemn acts of devotion to God Almighty. It ought to be solemnized with pomp and parade, with shows, games, sports, guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations, from one end of this continent to the other, from this time forward, forevermore. . . ." Adams, C. F., ed., *Familiar letters of John Adams and his wife, Abigail Adams during the American Revolution*, 193-194, N. Y., Hurd and Houghton, 1876.

¹⁰⁵ Ford, *op. cit.* 5: 510-516; Burnett, *Letters* 1: 528-538.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 6: 1-4, 7, 1933; Ford, *op. cit.* 19: 208-223. The Congress remained in Philadelphia until June 21, 1783 when it moved to Princeton, N. J. Other capitals under the Confederation were Annapolis, Md. (1783-1784), Trenton, N. J. (1784), and New York City (1785-1788). *A Biographical Congressional Directory*, 25, Washington, Gov't. Printing Office, 1913. Efforts of the Pennsylvania Legislature, in 1783 and 1784, to have Congress return to Philadelphia were unsuccessful. *Votes of the Assembly* [1781-1784], 791-792, 888, and 910, Phila., John Dunlap, [1781-1784] and *Journals of the Assembly of Pennsylvania Minutes of 1st Session 9th Assembly* [1784-1786], 37, Phila., Francis Bailey, [1784-1786].

¹⁰⁷ For the ceremony pertaining to the reception of the French minister on August 6, 1778 see Ford, ed., *op. cit.* 11: 753-757, the *Pennsylvania Packet* of August 11, 1778, and Hazard's *Register* 4: 102. A detailed account, together with a "Plan de la Séance du Congrès," (fig. 9) transmitted by Gérard to Vergennes, may be found in Doniol, Henri, *Histoire de la participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* 3: 311-313, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, ca. 1888. See also Meng, John J., ed., *Despatches and instructions of Conrad Alexandre Gérard 1778-1780*, 198-200, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1939, and Burnett, *Letters* 3: 361-362. The official dispatches concerning the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown were received by the Congress on October 24, 1781. Ford, ed., *op. cit.* 21: 1071-1072. See also the *Pennsylvania Packet* of November 1, 1781 for a most interesting account of the celebration in Philadelphia. The captured colors were presented to the Congress on November 3, 1781. Ford, ed., *op. cit.* 21: 1099; see also, Parsons, ed., *op. cit.*, 46.

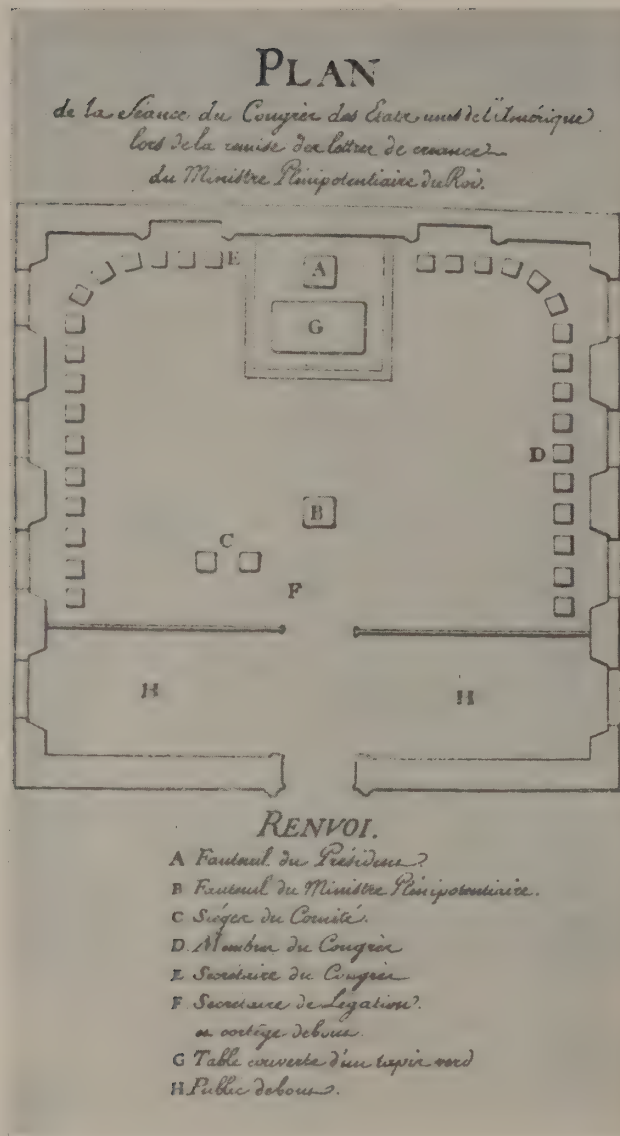


FIG. 9. Seating plan of the Assembly room, August 6, 1778, when the French Minister Gérard presented his credentials to Congress. Note the bar and gallery marked "H." From Henri Doniol, *Histoire de la Participation de la France à l'établissement des États-Unis d'Amérique* 3: 312, Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, ca. 1888. Courtesy of University of Pennsylvania.

During the Revolution, Congress sat in the Assembly room of the State House, except for periods of danger such as the occupation of Philadelphia by the British from September 1777 to June 1778.¹⁰⁸ Prior to the arrival of the British, the House of Representatives

¹⁰⁸ It is clear that the Congress used the east or Assembly room on the first floor. On December 14, 1775, "Gadsen moved that the Congress should purchase a handsome Time Piece and set it up in the Assembly Room in the State House, where we meet as a Present for the use of the Room." Robert Smith Diary quoted in Burnett, *Letters* 1: 276. See also Balch, E. W., ed., *Narrative of de Broglie, Mag. of Amer. Hist.* 1: 231-232, April 1876, and Schoepf, *op. cit.* 1: 69-70.

made plans to evacuate. On June 16, 1777, they resolved, "That the president and council be authorized and empowered to remove as soon as they think proper, all the bells belonging to the several churches and other public buildings, as also all the copper and brass in this city, to some place of safety."¹⁰⁹ Pursuant to this order the State House bells, and others bells of the city, were taken down in September and transported to Allentown.¹¹⁰

When the British occupied the city, the State House was used at first as quarters for their troops.¹¹¹ After the battle of Germantown, however, the long room served as a hospital for the wounded American soldiers.¹¹²

It is evident that the State House was left in poor condition by the British. The building was found by the Americans "in a most filthy condition & the inside torn much to pieces. . . ." ¹¹³ Because of the condition of the building, the Congress was forced to meet in the College Hall for a brief period.¹¹⁴

The Assembly room, after repairs were made, was again occupied by the Congress. A French visitor to Philadelphia in 1782 described it in some detail:

Congress meets in a large room on the ground floor. The chamber is large and without any other ornament than a bad engraving of Montgomery, one of Washington and a copy of the Declaration of Independence. It is furnished with thirteen tables each covered with a green cloth. One of the principal representatives of each of the thirteen states

¹⁰⁹ *Journal of the House of Representatives of Penna., 1776-1781*, 144, Phila., John Dunlap, 1782.

¹¹⁰ The bells were taken down by Evans and Allison at a cost of £92.17.6. Comptroller General's Financial Records (MS.), Journal "A-1" (1775-1786), 69, State Records Office, Harrisburg. On the way to Allentown, the wagon carrying the State House bell broke down in Bethlehem and had to be unloaded while repairs were being made. *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 20: 144, 1896; also *ibid.* 13: 74, 1889.

¹¹¹ Diary of Robert Morton, *ibid.* 1: 8, 1877.

¹¹² Extracts from the Journal of Mrs. Henry Drinker, *ibid.* 13: 300.

¹¹³ Josiah Bartlett to William Whipple, July 20, 1778, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 22: 115, 1899. Henry Laurens described the conditions more graphically: ". . . from various impediments I could not collect a sufficient number of States to form a Congress earlier than the 7th Instant [July], one was the offensiveness of the air in and around the State House, which the Enemy had made an Hospital and left it in a condition disgraceful to the Character of civility. Particularly they had opened a large square pit near the House, a receptacle for filth, into which they had also cast dead horses and the bodies of men who by the mercy of death had escaped from their further cruelties." Laurens to Rawlins Lowndes, July 15 [1778], Burnett, *Letters* 3: 332-333.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*; Josiah Bartlett to Col. Langdon, July 13, 1778. *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 22: 114. In August 1778 Cornelia Taylor was paid fourteen shillings for cleaning out the Assembly room (Journal "A-1." Comptroller General, State Records Office, Harrisburg), and in September William Hurrie received £16.14.0 for clearing out the State House. *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 298. Peter Anderson was paid £1.10.0 for whitewashing the State House in September. Journal "A-1," Comp. Gen., State Records Office, Harrisburg.

sits during the session at one of these tables. The president of Congress had his place in the middle of the hall, upon a sort of throne. The clerk is seated just below him.¹¹⁵

The Congress continued to meet in the State House until the summer of 1783. The crisis which finally brought about its departure from Philadelphia developed from the inability of the Congress to raise sufficient funds to provide back pay for the army. With the cessation of hostilities and the subsequent disbanding of the army without pay, a group of mutineers on June 21, 1783 surrounded the State House to demand settlement of their grievances. Although the members of the Congress were not harmed, the incident, and the continuing excitement among the soldiers in Philadelphia, caused that body to move to Princeton on June 26. The Congress was destined never to return to Philadelphia.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, the Assembly took advantage of the need for repairs after the British occupation to make much needed alterations so as to provide adequate space for their sessions. When the Assembly relinquished their room on the first floor to the Congress in 1775, they moved into the small room in the southeastern corner of the second floor.¹¹⁷ Although the enlargement of its membership, by the State Constitution of 1776, from forty-one to seventy-two Representatives made this room inadequate, nothing appears to have been done to improve conditions until after the British occupation.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Balch, ed., *op. cit.* 1: 231-232, April 1876.

¹¹⁶ Burnett, Edmund C., *The Continental Congress*, 572-578.

¹¹⁷ J. D. Schoepf wrote the following description of the State House in 1783: "The lower storey contains two large halls, one of which the Congress formerly made use of. . . . The other hall, on the ground floor, is for the use of the Supreme Court of Judicature. Above, there are two halls, for the General Assembly and for the Governor and Council." Schoepf, *op. cit.* 1: 69. Hiltzheimer also mentioned the Assembly as meeting in the upper chamber, in Parsons, ed., *op. cit.*, 131-132.

¹¹⁸ There were forty-one members in October, 1775. *Votes* 8: 7301-7302. Under the new constitution the number was increased to seventy-two. *Statutes* 9: 593-594, ch. II, sec. 17, Harrisburg, W. Stanley Ray, 1903. The state legislators contemplated leaving the State House because of the crowded conditions. On October 30, 1778, when the House assembled, there was an insufficient number for a quorum: "One of the gentlemen addressed his brother members, observing, that the chamber in which they were then assembled was already so crowded that it would be extremely inconvenient for the dispatch of public business; that it would become more so, when the house should be full; that therefore and also to make room for such of the freeman as choose to be present at the debates, he moved that some gentlemen should be appointed to visit and examine the different public buildings in the city and report in what place the house might be most conveniently accommodated: The inconvenience being obvious, the motion was unanimously agreed to, and three gentlemen appointed on that service." At the next meeting, on November 2, the House, still unable to constitute a quorum, received the committee's report, "that they had made the necessary enquiries, but that all the public buildings where the house could be tolerably accommodated, were so taken up with public stores &c. that they recommended the place where they then assembled, with some enlargement and alteration, as most suitable; they then pointed out the manner in which the



FIG. 10. The State House in 1778 showing wooden sheds at Fifth and Sixth Streets. Engraved by Trenchard for *Columbian Magazine* (1790); detail from Charles Willson Peale's portrait of Gérard. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

At this time the room was almost doubled in size by removing the partition between it and the long room, and continuing the west wall of the room to the Chestnut Street wall. This made the room the same size as the old Assembly room they had left.¹¹⁹ The new quarters seemed to be so comfortable that the Assembly occupied it for some time after Congress left Philadelphia in 1783.¹²⁰

Another "improvement" at this time was the erection of a brick necessary, probably located at the corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets.¹²¹ Apparently a causeway

proposed enlargement and alteration might be made; which being agreed to, the gentlemen were desired to procure workmen, &c. to make the same with all possible expedition: In the meantime it was agreed to meet at the college." *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 231. Another committee was named on October 7, 1779 "to direct the repairs of the chamber of the general assembly" (*ibid.*, 385), only to be followed by a third committee on November 27, 1779 (*ibid.*, 408). The committee made a report of their expenses on March 24, 1780. *Ibid.*, 454. It is possible that the Assembly continued to meet at the college until the fall of 1780. The session convening on October 23, 1780 is the first to mention meeting in the State House. *Ibid.*, 525.

¹¹⁹ Although no descriptions of the alterations have been found, an article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of March 18, 1789 mentions the Assembly room on the first floor and states that, "the apartment above . . . is of the same dimensions. . . ." The Assembly spent a considerable sum for furnishing the new chamber. On November 27, 1778, Francis Trumble was paid £60 for twenty Windsor chairs for use of the Assembly (*Journal of the House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 478). John Folwell was paid £200 for materials for a Speaker's chair. *Ibid.*, 636.

¹²⁰ On November 23, 1785, the Surveyor General was informed that he could be "accommodated with an apartment in the State House for holding his office; that the room assigned to him for this purpose is that lately occupied by the General Assembly. . . ." *Colonial Records* 14: 583, 1853.

¹²¹ The absence of reference to a necessary prior to 1778 is puzzling. The use of the words ". . . for the new privy . . ."

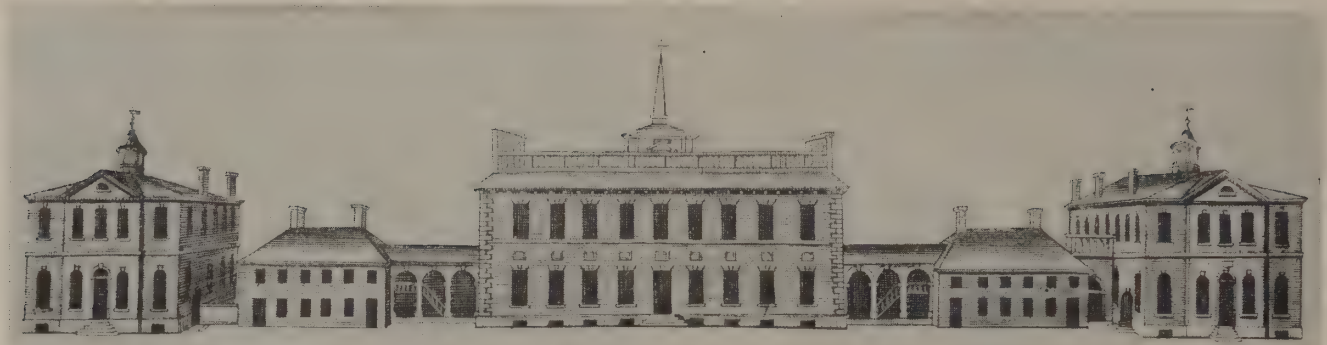


FIG. 11. The State House, after removal of wooden steeple, with the Supreme Court (City Hall) building on left and Congress Hall (County Courthouse) on right. This engraved view is from the Davies map of 1794. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

was built to provide access from the State House.¹²²

From the large sums expended at this time, and the great amounts of building materials purchased, the repairs to the State House must have been extensive.¹²³ With the exception of the changes made on the upper floor, however, there is no record of great alterations made to the interior arrangements of the State House.

The most important alteration made to the exterior of the building was the removal of the badly decayed wooden steeple above the brick tower. In April 1781, the Supreme Executive Council was "authorized and directed to have such parts of the steeple of the State House as are constructed of wood and in a decayed and dangerous condition, taken down, and the remainder sufficiently and effectually covered, in such manner as may be necessary for the preservation of said building."¹²⁴ After the steeple was removed, the brick tower was covered with a low, sloping, hip roof surmounted by a slender finial.¹²⁵

at this time, however, would indicate that an earlier building existed. *Journal of the House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 481. The location of the building is not too definite, but it apparently was on the site of the subsequently erected City Hall on the northeast corner of the Square. On July 26, 1790, the Supreme Executive Council noted "that in consequence of the corporations erecting the City Hall, the necessary in the State House yard must be taken down," and resolved "that a proper place be fixed upon, and workmen employed to erect a building for a necessary." *Colonial Records* 16: 410, 1853.

¹²² Jacob Stovemetz [Steinmetz] was paid £124.6.3 for bricks for "The new building, causeway, &c. at the State House on Nov. 9, 1778." *Journals of House of Representatives, 1776-1781*, 480.

¹²³ See *ibid.*, 274-299, 478-489, 635-640 for accounts of payments made by the Treasurer. From October 27, 1778 to May 11, 1779, Robert Allison, carpenter, was paid £3600. See "Contingent expenses . . . 1778-1780," in Journal "A-1," 90-91, Comptroller General Records, State Records Office. On February 17, 1780, he received an additional £511.17.5 "for carpenters work done at State House." *Ibid.*, 119.

¹²⁴ *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., 1776-1781*, 604.

¹²⁵ See William Birch's *Views of Philadelphia*, "Back of the State House" (pl. 22) for appearance of altered steeple. Thomas Nevell was the carpenter responsible for the alterations. See Nevell's estimate in *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 9: 46-47, 1854, and his letters to President Reed, April 16, 1781, in *ibid.* 9: 76-77, and of July 16, 1781 in *ibid.* 9: 283. John Coburn, a

A French visitor to Philadelphia in August 1782, shortly after the wooden steeple was removed, was not too pleased with the result. He wrote, "The state-house . . . is a building literally crushed by a huge massive tower, square and not very solid."¹²⁶

Notwithstanding the repairs of 1778-1780, it appears that the State House still needed additional work. By 1784 it was apparent that extensive repairs were necessary. A committee of the House of Representatives, appointed in January, made a detailed survey of the building and in September recommended essential repairs estimated at £684.5.0.¹²⁷ These repairs pertained largely to the roof and exterior woodwork of the building.¹²⁸ In the following year additional repairs, estimated at £505.10.0, were recommended.¹²⁹

rigger, was employed by Nevell in "getting down the Old Steeple, and getting up the new one, getting up the Bell, and fixing of it." Hazard's *Register* 2: 376. On February 22, 1785, the committee of the Assembly responsible for the repairs to the State House reported an item for, "Hanging the bell in the upper brick story, and setting three of the windows with sounding boards. . . ." *Journals of Assembly of Pa., 1783* (Minutes of 2nd Session, 9th Assembly), 152.

¹²⁶ Balch, ed., *op. cit.* 1: 231.

¹²⁷ *Journal of House of Representatives of Pa., [1781-1784]*, 97, 325; *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 10: 335-336, 1854.

¹²⁸ James Pearson, "House Carpenter," apparently made the repairs with the exception of the roof repairs at a cost of £460. See Pearson's report to Supreme Executive Council, December 20, 1784, *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 10: 373; *Colonial Records* 14: 285-286.

¹²⁹ The report of the committee was received on February 22, 1785, but consideration of it was postponed. *Journal of the Assembly of Penna. [1785]* (Min. of the 2nd Sess., 9th Gen. Assembly), 152, Phila., F. Bailey, 1786. It is not clear whether all of the suggested repairs were made, but on November 12, 1785, James Pearson reported to the Council that he had received a total of £990 on account for repairing the State House and requested an additional £200. *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 10: 535, 1854. On November 29, 1785, the House resolved that the roof "between the Steeple and the turret of the clock bell . . ." be covered with copper. In addition, three courses of shingles on each side of the ridge were to be replaced and the upper pitches painted "with clarified turpentine and Spanish brown." *Journal of Assembly of Pa.* (Min. of 1st Sess., 10th Gen. Assembly), 64; *Colonial Records* 14: 542. James Pearson again received the contract for the work for the sum of £83. See articles of agreement between the Council and Pearson,

Before the Assembly returned to its old room on the first floor of the State House, certain "alterations and repairs" were made to it as well as to the adjoining committee room.¹³⁰ This work was followed by a total replacement of the roof of the committee room.¹³¹ Proposals to erect a gallery in the Assembly room and to build a partition so as to separate the Supreme Court chamber from the public entry hall came to nothing.¹³²

The repairs, alterations, and improvements made in the State House, together with the landscaping carried out in the yard to provide "more walks, shaded with trees, a pleasant lawn, and several beds of shrubs and flowers," provided an excellent setting for the approaching Federal Constitutional Convention.¹³³ The Convention, attended by the leading minds of the new nation, convened in the Assembly room of the State House on May 25, 1787.¹³⁴ With Washington as the presiding

December 15, 1785, in *ibid.* 14: 597. William Williams and Silas Engles bid £83.10.0. *Penna. Archives* (1st ser.) 12: 295, 1856.

¹³⁰ On October 25, 1785, Pearson received £71.5.10 for this work. Journal "AA," No. 2, Comp. Gen. Rec., State Records Office, Harrisburg, 680. See note 118.

¹³¹ On September 27, 1786, it was reported to the House that James Pearson had constructed the new roof for the sum of £32.10.0. *Journal of Assembly of Pa.* (Min. 3rd Sess., 10th Gen. Assembly), 320-321.

¹³² In the *Pennsylvania Evening Herald*, September 9, 1786, it was reported that a committee was appointed "to make an estimate of the expense of erecting a gallery in the Assembly room, for the convenience of those citizens who may choose to attend the debates." Use of the word "erecting" would seem to indicate a raised gallery was proposed. Haviland, in 1831, upon examining the room before restoration, thought he found evidence of such a gallery. *Hazard's Register* 7: 264-265, 1831. There is nothing to indicate it was built. A railing or bar had earlier been placed in the room, and apparently the public space "without the bar" was frequently referred to as "the gallery." See mention, on March 6, 1786, in *Votes* 7: 5566. The location of the bar is shown in Doniol, *op. cit.* 3: 312. The *Pennsylvania Packet* of August 11, 1778, in describing the reception of the French Minister Gérard by the Congress, reported that one hundred gentlemen were in the audience without the bar. A correspondent to the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, March 18, 1789, wrote that the Assembly room "will contain two hundred persons in the gallery without the bar. . . ." Furthermore, Gerry in 1790 declared in Congress in New York, "The State House of Philadelphia has no gallery. . . ." *Ibid.*, June 9, 1790. A proposal was made to the General Assembly on November 23, 1786 to appoint a committee to obtain an estimate on erecting the partition between the Supreme Court chamber and the hall and "setting up a stove therein." The resolution was not passed when considered on November 30. See Reeder, *loc. cit.* 572, note 148, citing Min. Gen. Assembly for November 23, 30, 1786. No earlier mention has been found of any heating arrangement for the Supreme Court chamber. The chimneys on the west end of the State House apparently did not reach to the first floor. In Birch's *Views of Philadelphia* a scene of the back of the State House shows that in 1799 two stove pipes came out of the upper panes of the two western windows and crossed the wall diagonally to enter the chimneys from outside the building.

¹³³ *Columbian Magazine* for July 1787.

¹³⁴ Some confusion has existed over the meeting place of the Convention because of the Rev. Manasseh Cutler's statement, written on July 13, 1787, that the body was meeting upstairs.

officer, it completed the drafting of the Constitution and adjourned on September 17.

Following the departure of the delegates from Philadelphia after the close of the Federal Constitutional Convention, the State House became the meeting place of two state conventions. The first met to consider and ratify the Federal Constitution,¹³⁵ the second to frame and adopt the state constitution of 1790.¹³⁶

Some repairs, and probably some alterations, were made to the State House in 1788 and 1789. Performed under the direction of Joseph Rakestraw, this work required 500 feet of pine boards "to repair the Assembly Room" and included "carving work" and plastering.¹³⁷ The extent of the repairs may be judged from the fact that Rakestraw received in payment £1258.14.4 in June 1789 and £500 in October 1789.¹³⁸

PHILADELPHIA, THE CAPITAL

Just prior to Philadelphia's becoming the capital of the United States, Independence Hall acquired two neighbors of destiny—the City Hall on the east and the County Courthouse on the west. These fulfilled the original plan of a city government center as conceived by Andrew Hamilton. Rather little is known about the City Hall, but considerably more about the County Courthouse.

The Federal Government under the new Constitution first met in New York where Federal Hall Memorial National Historic Site now stands; then, in 1790, that

Cutler, *op. cit.* 1: 262. Undoubtedly, this must have been a committee meeting of the Convention for Jacob Hiltzheimer, a member of the General Assembly, noted on September 5, 1787 that the Convention had been meeting downstairs and that the Assembly, then in recess, would meet upstairs. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 131. Cf. *Journal of the Assembly of Pa.* (Min. 3rd Sess., 11th Assembly), 200. In addition the *Columbian Magazine* of July 1787 said the sessions of the Convention were held "in the same hall which enclosed the patriots who framed the Declaration of Independence." See Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 568 for a well-reasoned discussion of this point.

¹³⁵ The state ratifying convention met in the Assembly room upstairs. Parsons, *op. cit.*, 138.

¹³⁶ Evidence is inconclusive as to the room used by the state constitutional convention. The Assembly was in session at this time and it seems logical to assume that the convention used the room upstairs. *Ibid.*, 159; *Minutes of Convention of Commonwealth of Pennsylvania*, 1789.

¹³⁷ A manuscript account of the work performed by Rakestraw from June 12 to 17, 1789 is listed in a voucher found in State Records Office, Harrisburg (Internal Improvements, Buildings, State House). Brick was purchased for "laying the entry and hall floor of the Statehouse and Steeple. . . ." but the work appears not to have been done at this time. The brick floor in the State House was laid prior to 1818 when the building was described in an insurance survey. Philadelphia Contributionship Survey No. 3795, Survey Book 1795-1824, p. 218. See note 64. Watson states that a tile floor was laid when the State House was first erected, but no substantiating proof has been found. Watson, *op. cit.* 1: 396.

¹³⁸ Rakestraw's account, June 12-17, 1780, *op. cit.*; Journal "AAA-3" (1788-1789), Comp. Gen. Financial Records, Harrisburg, 172.



FIG. 12. "View of Several Public Buildings in Philadelphia," from *Columbian Magazine*, 1790. Left to right (1) the Episcopal Academy; (2) Congress Hall; (3) the State House (actually the steeple had been removed in 1781); (4) the Hall of the American Philosophical Society; (5) the Hall of the Library Company of Philadelphia; (6) Carpenters' Hall. This is the only known view showing the Committee Room of the Assembly (just to the right of the State House tower). Courtesy of the Hist. Soc. of Penna.

body came to Philadelphia.¹³⁹ Congress sat in the new County Courthouse (now known as Congress Hall) and the United States Supreme Court in the new City Hall (now known as the Supreme Court Building).¹⁴⁰

Although the Residence Act, approved July 16, 1790, directed that the permanent capital was to be situated on the Potomac, it also stipulated that the temporary seat of government was to be in Philadelphia for ten years.¹⁴¹ Robert Morris was generally credited with bringing the capital to Philadelphia,¹⁴² and was castigated

by the New Yorkers for his part in its removal. A particularly vicious attack was the New York cartoon depicting Morris and the devil as they led the Congress from New York to Philadelphia.¹⁴³ Naturally, many attempts were made by local interests to locate the permanent capital in Philadelphia, while some forces almost succeeded in locating it in nearby Germantown.¹⁴⁴ Southerners, needless to say, were eager to move the capital to the Potomac,¹⁴⁵ and their illustrious member, Washington, supported this site.¹⁴⁶ The Residence Act, as a compromise, received sufficient support to be passed by the Congress, and Philadelphia became the capital.

1. SUPREME COURT BUILDING

During the Colonial period the Philadelphia city government occupied the courthouse at Second and High (now Market) Streets. To accommodate the growth of municipal departments and functions, however, a larger city hall was erected in 1790–1791 on the State House Square.¹⁴⁷ When Philadelphia became the tem-

which was read." *Journals of Senate of the United States* [1789–1793], 83, Washington, Gales and Seaton, 1820.

¹⁴³ This cartoon is in the possession of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

¹⁴⁴ For Philadelphia, see *Journals of the Senate*, 148, 151, 169, 170, 171, 172, 177; *Annals of Congress* 2: 1718, 1719, 1730. For Germantown, see *Journals of the Senate*, 88; *Annals of Congress* 1: 71, 789, 922, 925; 2: 1725, 1735.

¹⁴⁵ *Annals of Congress* 1: 844–848, 854–857, 860–865, 866–868, 922; 2: 1728, 1729.

¹⁴⁶ Washington was strongly in favor of the Potomac site; see, for example, his letter to David Stuart of November 20, 1791 in John B. Fitzpatrick, ed., *The writings of George Washington* 31: 419–423, Washington, Government Printing Office, 1939.

¹⁴⁷ Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 583. The erection of the new city hall and county courthouse had been contemplated for fifty years (see note 99). The funds for the erection of the city hall were raised mainly from a lottery authorized by the Assembly on March 27, 1789. The lottery was to raise ten thousand dollars of which eight thousand were to go to the City of Philadelphia towards the building of a city hall and two thousand to Dickin-

¹³⁹ The dismay felt by New Yorkers at losing the Federal Capital to Philadelphia is well illustrated in an anonymous letter which appeared in Dunlap's *Daily Advertiser* for March 4, 1791. The anonymous writer said, in part: "... We are told that both houses of Congress are stored into a county court house, a single building, without portico or trees to shade them from the midday sun. In summer it must be as hot as Tophet. Was this contrived to fit the constitutions of the Southern members, or merely to save money, by driving away the northern members in the spring, and working short sessions? New York expended 25,000 under the mere impression of propriety and respect. Philadelphia more frugal, will not expend a tenth part of the money, though they are sure of ten years residence. Their little court house hooked up in humble imitation of our city-hall, is found to be good enough for Congress, and the President is to continue in a noisy house in Market Street, much too small for his family, serenaded every morning with the music of waggons. . . ."

¹⁴⁰ For negotiations relating to the fitting up of the County Courthouse for the accommodation of Congress, see *Minutes of the Common Council* 1: 237, 316; see also, Reeder, *loc. cit.* 573–574 and note 154. For the occupancy of City Hall by the U. S. Supreme Court, see *ibid.*, 583 and *Gazette of the United States*, August 3, 1791.

¹⁴¹ "An act for establishing the temporary and permanent seat of the Government of the United States approved July 16, 1790," in *Annals of the Congress of the United States* 2: 2294.

¹⁴² "Monday Sept., 21 [1789], Mr. Morris in behalf of the Senators from the State of Pennsylvania, introduced a resolve of the General Assembly of that State, of March the 5th, 1789, making 'a respectful offer to Congress of the use of any or all the public buildings in Philadelphia, the property of the State. &c., in case Congress should, at any time, incline to make choice of that city for temporary residence of the Federal Government,'

porary national capital, the new city hall was offered, together with the new county courthouse, to the Federal Government. Thus the city hall became the seat of the Supreme Court of the United States.¹⁴⁸

No evidence of the original plan for this building has as yet been found, but eighteenth-century pictures show the exterior substantially as it is today. The Supreme Court Building, conforming in style with other buildings on the Square, is a two-story brick structure approximately fifty feet wide by sixty-six feet deep, with a projecting southern bay, a peaked roof and a cupola in the middle of the roof.

A plan appearing in a Philadelphia guide book of 1824¹⁴⁹ shows that the first floor contained an open stairway (along the north wall) leading to the second story, two small rooms on the east side of the building, and one on the west; the south end had one large chamber. The second floor was composed of a single large room on the east side, another on the south end, and two smaller rooms on the west. Stairs led up to the attic.

As it stands today, the first floor of the building contains a room in the northeastern corner, an adjacent hall (to the west) containing the stairway, and a room (the full width of the building) at the south end approximately fifty feet square. The second floor is similar, with a large room on the south end, but with various smaller rooms on the east and west sides separated by a central hallway.

During the period of occupancy by the Supreme Court of the United States between 1791 and 1800, it is believed that this judiciary body usually sat in the Mayor's Court, the large room at the south end of the first floor.¹⁵⁰ There is some doubt on this point, however. It is quite likely that the corresponding room on the second floor was also used on occasions by the high tribunal. At the first session held in this building on August 1, 1791, John Jay presided as Chief Justice, with James Wilson, William Cushing, John Blair, and James Iredell as Associate Justices.¹⁵¹ Jay was succeeded in

turn by John Rutledge and Oliver Ellsworth.¹⁵² Here the Court began its active work, thereby laying the foundation for the development of the Judicial Branch of the Federal Government.

After the Supreme Court moved to Washington in 1800, the building continued in use as the city hall, with lower Federal courts also holding sessions periodically. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the city government moved to its new quarters at Broad and Market Streets, and the building was temporarily closed. For many years the building was used for the meetings of various groups, such as the Grand Army of the Republic, Boy Scouts, and Pennsylvania Prison Society. Finally in 1922 the Old City Hall was restored to its early appearance to serve as a museum.

2. CONGRESS HALL

The ground on which Congress Hall stands was purchased for the Province of Pennsylvania in 1736.¹⁵³ In 1775 the Common Council of the City of Philadelphia discussed the matter of erecting a courthouse on the southeast corner of Sixth and Chestnut Streets as well as a city hall on the southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut. It was decided to have a plan prepared and an estimate made as to the probable cost.¹⁵⁴ It was not till 1785, however, that the Assembly of Pennsylvania passed an Act and appropriated funds for the erection of a county building.¹⁵⁵ Work finally commenced in 1787 and was completed in 1789.¹⁵⁶ This county court

¹⁵² Warren, Charles, *The Supreme Court in United States history* 1: 35, 128, 140, Boston, Little, Brown & Co, 1922.

¹⁵³ The ground for the City Hall on the southwest corner of Fifth and Chestnut Streets, was acquired at the same time. Both lots were of the same dimensions, i.e., fifty feet wide along Chestnut Street and seventy-three feet deep along Fifth and Sixth Streets. It was provided that upon these two lots "two public Buildings are to be erected, of the like outward Form, structure and Dimensions, the one for the Use of the County, and the other for the Use of the City of Philadelphia, and are to be for the Holding of Courts, or Common Halls, and not for private Dwellings." *Votes* 3: 2355-2356. An act passed on February 17, 1762 provided for the conveyance of the two lots to the following trustees: Isaac Norris, Thomas Leech, Joseph Fox, Samuel Rhoads, Joseph Galloway, John Baynton, and Edward Pennington. They were to convey this land to the city and county, respectively, upon the payment of £50 each. See *Statutes at Large* 6: 177-183, 1899. Payment of the fee of £50 by the Corporation of Philadelphia to the Province was made in 1766. See *Votes* 7: 5928. Finally, in an act passed March 29, 1787, the General Assembly extended the depth of both lots to eighty-eight feet. See *Statutes at Large* 12: 472-473, 1906.

¹⁵⁴ *Minutes of Common Council* (1704-1776), 804.

¹⁵⁵ *Statutes at Large* 11: 596-601, and 12: 53-57, 1906.

¹⁵⁶ Work commenced in the spring of 1787, sometime after March 29 and before July. The *Columbian Magazine* for July speaks of the courthouse as "lately" begun. The date of completion appears to have been sometime prior to April 15, 1789, as on that date the Mayor and Councilmen met for the first time in the south room on the second floor. See *Minutes of City Council* 1: 27-35; see also Reeder, *loc. cit.* 533 note 152, and *Columbian Magazine* for January, 1790. (The latter has a picture of Congress Hall at that time.)

son College. *Statutes* 13: 276-282. A small fund had originated in 1746 when Mayor James Hamilton presented £150 to the city towards the building of an exchange or other public buildings in lieu of the customary dinner to the Council. *Minutes of Common Council, 1704-1776*, 463-464. Later mayors also made donations to this fund. *Ibid.*, 502, 511, 563. In 1763 five hundred pounds of fund was authorized to be used towards erecting an exchange at Front and High Streets. *Ibid.*, 684. In October 1772 the special fund amounted to £136.15.1. *Ibid.*, 776. See also *Colonial Records* 14: 285, and act of April 8, 1785, No. MCLXV, *Statutes* 11: 597 for account of other funds.

¹⁴⁸ See note 139.

¹⁴⁹ [Anon.], *Philadelphia in 1824* . . . opposite p. 133, Phila., Carey & Lea, 1824.

¹⁵⁰ Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 584.

¹⁵¹ *Gazette of the United States*, August 3, 1791; Reeder, *loc. cit.*, 583.



FIG. 13. Congress Hall (County Courthouse) prior to enlargement of 1793. From *Columbian Magazine*, January, 1790. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

building became the meeting place of the first United States Congress, Third Session, on December 6, 1790¹⁵⁷; F. A. Muhlenberg was the Speaker of the House and John Adams, President of the Senate.¹⁵⁸

The physical history of Congress Hall is incomplete, and only a few highlights can be offered here. Before the County Court House could be turned over to the United States Congress, alterations had to be made to

¹⁵⁷ *Annals of Congress* 2: 1770.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 2: 1770, 2371. *A Biog. Cong. Dir.*, 30. "The House of Representatives, in session," writes an anonymous correspondent in 1829, "occupied the whole of the ground floor, upon a platform elevated three steps in ascent, plainly carpeted, and covering nearly the whole of the area, with a limited 'Loggia,' or promenade for the members and privileged persons; and four narrow desks, between the Sixth Street windows, for the Stenographers, Lloyd, Gales, Callender, and Duane. The Speaker's chair, without canopy, was of plain leather, and brass nails, facing the east, at or near the centre of the western wall. The first Speaker of the House, in this city, was Frederick Augustus Muhlenberg, who, by his portly person, and handsome rotundity, literally filled the chair. . . ."

Regarding the Senate and Mr. Adams, upstairs, he says: "In a very plain chair, without canopy, and a small mahogany table before him, festooned at the sides and front with green silk, Mr. Adams, the Vice President, presided as President of the Senate, facing the north. . . . Among the thirty Senators of that day, there was observed constantly, during the debate, the most delightful silence, the most beautiful order, gravity, and personal dignity of manner. . . ." See *Reminiscences in Hazard's Register* 4: 142, 1829.

fit the building for its new purpose. The first floor chamber, to be used by the House of Representatives, was fitted up with a gallery to accommodate about three hundred people.¹⁵⁹ The chamber was furnished with mahogany tables and elbow chairs, carpeting, stoves, and venetian blinds, all of fine workmanship.¹⁶⁰ The Senate Chamber on the second floor was even more elegantly furnished.¹⁶¹

Then, between 1793 and 1795, to accommodate an increase in membership of the House from sixty-eight to a hundred and five, the building had to be enlarged by an addition of, apparently, twenty-six feet to the end of the original structure.¹⁶² Two windows were added to each story on the east and west sides, and two additional chimneys were installed.¹⁶³ After these alterations, the building still measured fifty feet along Chestnut Street, while the depth on Sixth Street was increased to one hundred feet.¹⁶⁴ The first floor, though larger, probably remained one large room with a hallway entrance. The second floor, however, was apparently altered in its arrangement with the south room (or Senate Chamber) now included in the new extension; the rest of the second floor most likely contained four smaller rooms, two each on the east and west sides of the building, separated by a hallway leading into the Senate Chamber.¹⁶⁵

The next addition was the Senate gallery, constructed in 1795.¹⁶⁶ It was similar to the gallery on the floor below, but smaller.¹⁶⁷ Extending the length of the Senate Chamber at the northern end, it was probably

¹⁵⁹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, December 6, 1790.

¹⁶⁰ Evidence of this work may be found in the Public Records Office, Harrisburg, under "Public Improvements—Congress Hall" in the form of vouchers for payment. The cost for furniture and fixtures was £1565.12.3½; for labor, £899.7.11; for materials, £136.14.11.

¹⁶¹ Weld, Isaac, *Travels in North America* . . . 10, London, J. Stockdale, 1807.

¹⁶² An act of April 11, 1793 specified that Congress Hall would be enlarged not over forty feet in depth on Sixth Street; see *Statutes at Large* 14: 431–432. Today one can see a break in the continuity (on the outside) of the north-south walls of Congress Hall; the distance from this line to the present rear (south end) of the building measures twenty-six feet.

¹⁶³ This statement is based on a comparison between the appearance of the building as shown on Davies' map of Philadelphia, 1794, and its appearance as depicted in the *Columbian Magazine* engraving (January, 1790).

¹⁶⁴ Present day measurements.

¹⁶⁵ Letter from John McAllister to J. M. Wallace, February 19, 1872; this letter contains McAllister's recollections of visiting Congress as a boy (about twelve years old). Quoted in Wallace, J. W., *Discourse before the Historical Society of Pennsylvania*, March 11, 1872, 59–62.

¹⁶⁶ "Report of the Registrar General 1796," *Journal of House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, 1795–1796*, 5. See also Hazard's *Register* 16: 79–80, July 1835–January 1836; this quotes an article in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of July, 1835, which says that when the gallery was removed that year, an inscription was found in the pilaster naming George Forepaugh as the master carpenter and dated November 14, 1795.

¹⁶⁷ See note 165.

entered from the east room adjoining the Senate Chamber. Lastly, in 1796-1797, the City of Philadelphia replaced the floors in the Senate Chamber.¹⁶⁸

In the nineteenth century a number of changes were made to the interior arrangement to accommodate the several courts and municipal departments using the building. As for the exterior, one known change of major proportion was the blocking of the Chestnut Street entrance and the opening of a doorway on the Sixth Street side.¹⁶⁹ In the restorations which followed after 1895, however, the original situation was restored.

As for the historical accuracy of the final restoration, carried out by the American Institute of Architects, it is not possible to give detailed evaluation at this time. Some features as now existing seem to be questionable. For instance, there are now twin stairs leading to the second floor where, originally, there appears to have been but one.¹⁷⁰ Also, in the House Chamber, the three tiers replaced in 1934 under other auspices, can hardly accommodate more than about sixty-eight chairs, and it is known that from 1795 the House had a membership of one hundred and six.

As yet, none of the original architectural plans or drawings for Congress Hall have been discovered. The earliest picture is a copper plate engraving, entitled "Views of Several Public Buildings in Philadelphia," which appeared in the *Columbian Magazine* for January, 1790. The view, made before the alterations of 1793, shows the south and west sides of a two-story brick building with a hipped roof, dome shaped cupola, and a dormer to the south. Three chimneys are in evidence, two on the west and one on the east side; possibly a fourth chimney is hidden by the roof and cupola. The west elevation shows five arched windows on the first floor separated from the second floor by a string-course. The second floor has five windows, four of which appear arched and one rectangular. The print also shows five windows in each story of the south elevation, three in



FIG. 14. Back of State House just before turn of century. Note hip roof on tower, which replaced the steeple in 1781, the bell cupola directly in front of tower on State House roof, and tall-case clock. Engraving by Birch (1799). Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

¹⁶⁸ Report of James Pearson and William Garrigues [?], October 20, 1796; in State Archives, Harrisburg, Congress Hall box.

¹⁶⁹ McAllister letter cited in note 27. This door shows up in many pictures, e.g., J. T. Brown's lithograph of the drawing by J. C. Wild (ca. 1840); photographs made later in the nineteenth century also show the door.

¹⁷⁰ In Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 1: 489, we find: "From the front door on Chestnut Street a hall or entry led [in 1797] to the door of the hall of the House of Representatives, or to the stairway leading to the second story, in the same position as the present stairway [ca. 1880] leading to the District Court rooms." A letter of December 26, 1795 from Theophilus Bradbury, Congressman from Massachusetts, to his daughter implies but one stairway in Congress Hall: "You ascend the stairs leading to the [Senate] chamber at the north end [of the building]. . . ." Letter printed in *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 8: 226-227, 1884. See also Baker, William S., Washington after the revolution, 1784-1799, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 20: 74, 1896; the author says Congress Hall had ". . . a vestibule running along the full front on Chestnut Street, and contain[ed] on the left of the main entrance the staircase leading to the chambers above."

the center bay. Evidently the flanking windows of the south elevation were replaced by doors in 1793 since there is evidence that in 1795 this condition prevailed, since Theophilus Bradbury, a member of Congress from Massachusetts, wrote of Congress Hall: ". . . At the south end . . . there is an area of half circle with large windows looking out into a large square or mall . . . and two doors open into it." ¹⁷¹

Among the outstanding events that took place in the building, must be mentioned that on March 4, 1793 George Washington was inaugurated for his second term in the Senate Chamber upstairs ¹⁷²; at the same time, John Adams assumed the Presidency of the Senate. ¹⁷³ Washington delivered his last formal message to Congress, before retiring, in the Chamber of the

¹⁷¹ Quoted in *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 8: 226, 1884.

¹⁷² "Sat. March 2, 1793—The President notified the Senate that the President of the United States proposes to take the oath of office on Monday next, at 12 o'clock in the Senate Chamber." *Journal of the Senate of the United States (1789-1793)*, 501.

¹⁷³ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 3: 1821.

House of Representatives, downstairs, on December 7, 1796.¹⁷⁴ It is this message which some have confused with Washington's famous Farewell Address which, of course, he never delivered in person.

It was in Congress Hall that the first Bank of the United States and the Mint were established as part of the comprehensive program developed by Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, to rectify the disordered state of government finances.¹⁷⁵ Here, too, Jay's Treaty with England was debated and ratified¹⁷⁶; Vermont, Kentucky, and Tennessee were admitted into the Union¹⁷⁷; and it was while here that the Federal Government successfully weathered a major internal threat to its authority, the Whisky Rebellion in western Pennsylvania.¹⁷⁸

Here in the lower Chamber, Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth administered the oath of office to John Adams as the second President of the United States on March 4, 1797.¹⁷⁹ Two years later, official news of the death of Washington was received by Congress.¹⁸⁰ Here, too, were introduced General Henry Lee's famous words: "First in War, First in Peace, and First in the Hearts of his Countrymen."¹⁸¹ And finally, as almost one of its last official acts before leaving for the new Capital on the Potomac, Congress recommended that the next birthday of Washington be properly solemnized, setting the precedent for its future observance as a national holiday.¹⁸²

Following the removal of the Federal Capital to Washington in 1800, Congress Hall entered upon a less eventful, though no less useful, career. It reverted to the purpose for which it was originally erected, a courthouse. Throughout the nineteenth century, the Orphans' Court and the Courts of Common Pleas and Quarter Sessions met on the first floor, while the United States District and Circuit Courts used the old Senate Chamber and other rooms upstairs. Other courts and municipal departments used sections of the building, too, from time to time.¹⁸³

¹⁷⁴ *Journal of the Senate* . . . 1793-1799 2: 296-299.

¹⁷⁵ For the Bank see *Annals of Congress*, March 1789-March 1791 2: 2375-2382. For the Mint see *ibid.*, October 1791-March 1793, 69, 772, 1351-1355, 1411.

¹⁷⁶ Bailey, Thomas, *A diplomatic history of the American people*, 63-69, N. Y., Crofts, 1940.

¹⁷⁷ *Annals of Congress*, March 1789-March 1791, 2: 2372-2373 [Kentucky] 2374-2375 [Vermont]: *ibid.*, December 1795-June 1796, 109 [Tennessee].

¹⁷⁸ Morrison, Samuel E., and Henry S. Commager, *The growth of the American Republic* 1: 361-362, N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1942.

¹⁷⁹ *Journal of the Senate* 2: 397-401.

¹⁸⁰ *Annals of Congress*, December 1799-March 1801, 16, 203.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 1310.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 1532.

¹⁸³ See plan in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 133 et seq. which shows the rooms occupied by the various courts. The published *Journals of Councils* of the City of Philadelphia, from 1836 on, *passim*, indicate subsequent changes in the location of various courts. See also Scharf and Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*

By 1895 Congress Hall was abandoned, as expanding functions of the courts¹⁸⁴ and municipal departments necessitated their removal to more adequate quarters, particularly to the new City Hall which was conveniently located in the newer section of the city. A century of use left the exterior and interior of Congress Hall extensively changed from its original plan and in a poor state of repair. Patriotic groups, however, particularly the Pennsylvania Society of Colonial Dames, took action to preserve it as a historic shrine.¹⁸⁵ Under the supervision of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects,¹⁸⁶ restoration was completed in 1913. President Woodrow Wilson participated in the dedication ceremonies. In 1934 the Speaker's rostrum and the circular, ramped platform for the members' chairs and desks were rebuilt with Civil Works Administration funds.¹⁸⁷

AFTER 1800

With the turn of the century, Philadelphia ceased to be a capital city; the State Government moved to Lancaster and the Federal Government to Washington. The State House became an empty building, used apparently only at elections.¹⁸⁸

1. PURCHASE BY THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA

The Governor, on March 13, 1815, approved an act authorizing the county commissioners of Philadelphia to take charge of the State House and to rent out the space as they considered advisable. All profits obtained were to be used to make repairs and improvements on the properties.¹⁸⁹

Having released the State from responsibility for the State House, the Legislature next sought to realize money from the property to be used in building the new capitol in Harrisburg. In an act, approved March 11, 1816, the Legislature provided for the sale of the square and its buildings. This act required the Governor to appoint three commissioners, none from Philadelphia,

3: 1822; Pennypacker, Samuel W., *Congress Hall*, 28 et *passim*, Philadelphia, privately published, 1895.

¹⁸⁴ In June of 1895, for instance, ordinances were passed to allow both the University of Pennsylvania Law School and the Colonial Dames to occupy former court rooms in Congress Hall. See *Journal of Common Council*, April 1-September 26, 1895, 331, 353-354.

¹⁸⁵ *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 22: 252.

¹⁸⁶ See *Public Ledger* for September 21, 1913.

¹⁸⁷ The ceremonies are voluminously described in the Philadelphia newspapers around the first part of November, 1913. See *The Evening Bulletin* of Jan. 17, 1934 for C.W.A. work.

¹⁸⁸ The Legislature reserved the right to hold elections in the east room when Peale was granted permission to use it for museum purposes. *Laws of Penna., 1801-1802*, 283. See also letter of President Reed to Continental Congress, Jan. 4, 1779, in *Penna. Archives* (ser. I) 7: 140-141 for earlier use of this room to hold elections.

¹⁸⁹ "An ACT providing for repairing the State House in the city of Philadelphia." *Laws of Penna., 1814-1815*, CXVIII, 162-163.



FIG. 15. State House row with the new office buildings designed by Robert Mills which replaced the old wings and "piazzas" on either side of the State House. Engraving by Traversier (ca. 1828), published in France. This view is very similar to George Strickland's drawing, engraved by C. G. Childs in 1828. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

to lay out a street or streets through the square "in such manner as in their opinion will most conduce to the value of the property." The square was to be divided into lots suitable for building; the total amount to be realized was not to be less than \$150,000.¹⁹⁰

One section of the act, however, saved the State House. This provided that the City of Philadelphia should have the privilege of purchasing the building and square for the sum of \$70,000.¹⁹¹ The City Councils promptly passed an ordinance to purchase the property and took title to it on March 23, 1818.¹⁹²

Although the City of Philadelphia had saved the State House and its sister buildings from possible destruction, there is no evidence that there was any desire to preserve them intact. Prior to its purchase from the State, a series of petitions, beginning in January 1811, had been presented to the Legislature requesting that the commissioners of the City and County of Philadelphia be permitted "to pull down the east and west wings of the state-house . . . and to erect in their place, suitable buildings for the deposit of the records of said City and county. . . ." ¹⁹³ On March 24, 1812, the authority was granted to the local officials by the State govern-

ment.¹⁹⁴ The old wings, and the committee room, were demolished to be replaced by "modern" office buildings designed by the architect Robert Mills. These new offices consisted of two row buildings attached to the east and west ends of the State House. These offices, often called "State House row," were occupied by various officials of the city, county, and Federal governments.¹⁹⁵

Other changes to the State House followed as a result of the city's desire to adapt it for current needs. The most celebrated room in the building, the Assembly room in which the Declaration of Independence was adopted, became a court room. It was "modernized" by the removal of the paneling and the substitution of plaster and paint.¹⁹⁶ In addition, the original doorway to the State House from Chestnut Street was taken down and replaced by a more ornate doorway completely out of keeping with the simple dignity of the building.¹⁹⁷

2. PEALE'S MUSEUM

The various uses to which the State House was put during this period also show that it was not venerated as a patriotic shrine. The first occupant after the State government moved to Lancaster was Charles Willson Peale, who converted portions of the building into a museum of natural history and portrait gallery. It was most fortunate for the old building that a man of Peale's caliber was responsible for its care during this dark period. In 1802 he received permission to use the upper floor of the State House, including the tower rooms, and the Assembly room on the first floor for his museum which had occupied Philosophical Hall since 1794. By the terms of the agreement, Peale was responsible for

¹⁹⁴ *Laws of Commonwealth of Penna.* [1812-1813], 340-341.

¹⁹⁵ The plans and papers concerning Mills' buildings have not been found. See plan showing location of offices in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 133.

¹⁹⁶ *The Saturday Evening Post* for May 16, 1829 contains a description of the State House in which the rooms on the first floor are spoken of as having "a modern appearance, from alterations made a short time since, in violation of every principle of good taste. . . ." An Englishman, visiting the State House in 1832, was puzzled by the desecration of the room: "Some Goth in office modernized the room, for the purpose, as I was informed, of giving his nephew a job, and tore down all the old panelling and pillars which supported the ceiling, and substituted a coating of plaster and paint. It is a matter of surprise to me that the inhabitants ever permitted such a profanation, being generally so proud of their revolutionary relics and duds of arms." Coke, E. T., *A subaltern's furlough* . . . 37. London, Saunders and Ottey, 1833. Apparently the "modernizing" occurred prior to Jan. 9, 1819, for on that date John Trumbull wrote his wife that, "the alterations which have been made in the Room in which Congress actually sat on the famous 4th July are such that the picture cannot be hung in it. . . ." Trumbull Coll., MS. Div., Library of Congress, Washington.

¹⁹⁷ "The main entrance [to the State House] is by a Corinthian doorway, of recent construction. . . ." *The Saturday Evening Post*, May 16, 1829.

¹⁹⁰ "An ACT providing for the sale of the State House and State House Square in the city of Philadelphia." *Ibid.*, LXXIX, 109-112.

¹⁹¹ Section VII of above act. *Ibid.*

¹⁹² The commissioners of the county of Philadelphia refused "to deliver up possession of the lower part" of the State House to the city officials after the sale consummated on April 23, 1816. The Legislature thereupon passed a supplementary act to the foregoing act of sale, approved March 23, 1818, compelling the county officials to deliver possession of the property. *Ibid.*, 1817-1818, CXV, 234-235. The deed of sale to the city is recorded in Deed Book, MR, No. 20, 241-242, City Hall, Phila. Unfortunately, the minutes of the council for the period 1791 to 1835 cannot be located.

¹⁹³ *Journal of the House of Representatives of Pa.* [1810-1811], 202, 276, 469, 652. Some of these petitions mentioned the inclusion of a room in the new offices for the museum.

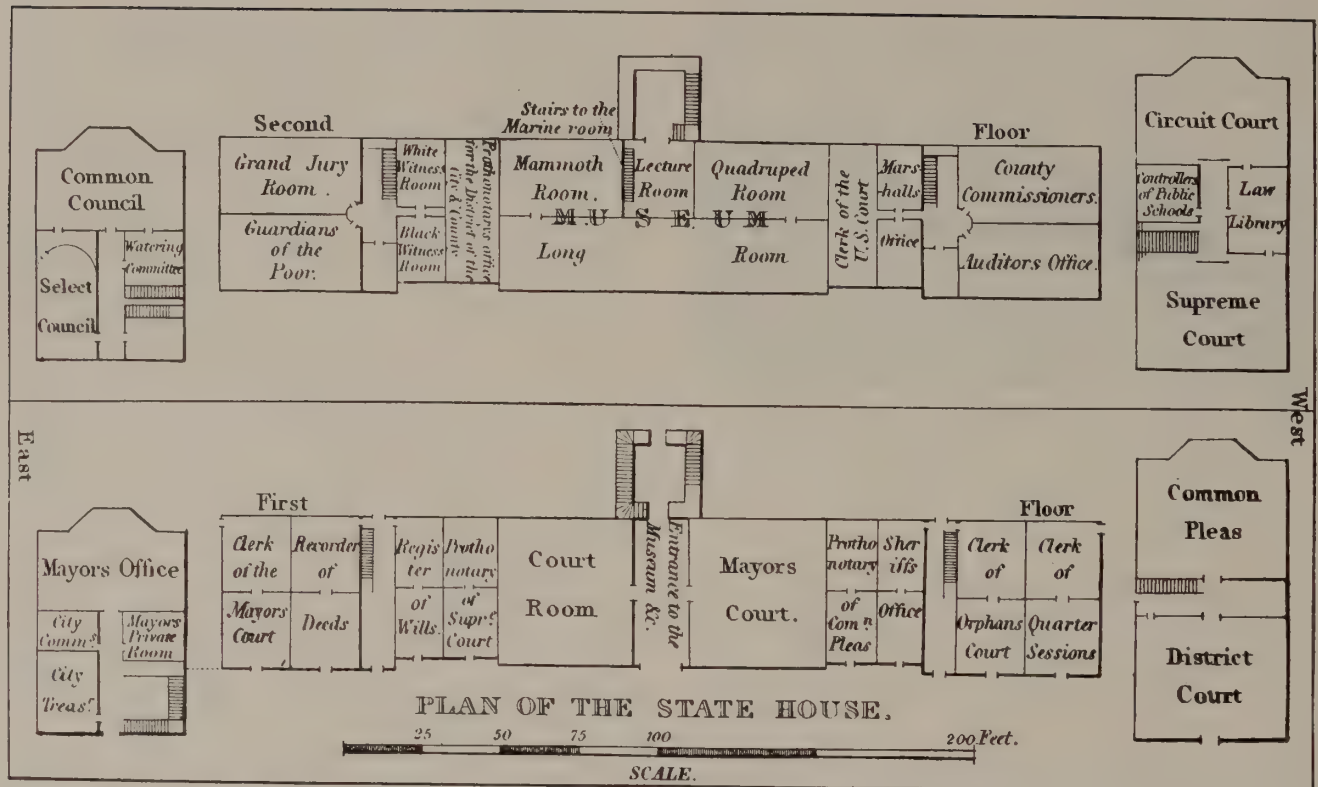


FIG. 16. Plan of the State House during its occupancy by the City government. From *Philadelphia in 1824*, facing p. 133.

the maintenance of both the building and the State House yard.¹⁹⁸

In order to make the building more suitable for his museum, Peale removed the alterations made in 1778–1779 to accommodate the Assembly, and rebuilt the long room as it had been during the Colonial period.¹⁹⁹ The museum, which occupied the second floor of the State House until 1828, included not only an extensive collection in natural history, but also a unique portrait gallery of the great men of the country painted largely by Charles Willson Peale and his son, Rembrandt.²⁰⁰ Peale also took most seriously his charge to care for the yard. He planted trees, added new gates, benches, and improved the walls and lawns.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁸ Joint resolution of March 17, 1802. *Laws of the Commonwealth of Penna., 1801–1802*, 283. Peale's petition was presented to the House on Feb. 24, 1800. *Journal of the House of Representatives of Penna. [1799–1800]*, 280.

¹⁹⁹ The long room was said to be one hundred feet long in 1811. Mease, James, *The picture of Philadelphia . . .* 312, Phila., B. & T. Kite, 1811. The appearance of the room is shown in Peale's Portrait of the Artist in his Museum in the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia. (See fig. 6 in article by C. C. Sellers on Peale's Museum in this volume.)

²⁰⁰ Sellers, Charles Coleman, *Charles Willson Peale* 2: 227–246, Phila. Mem. Amer. Philos. Soc. 23 (1 & 2), 1947. See also Mease, *op. cit.*, 311–314 for a detailed description of the museum in 1811, and plan of museum in 1824 in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 133.

²⁰¹ Charles W. Peale to Select and Common Councils, March 21, 1804, in Amer. Philos. Soc.; see also Sellers, *op. cit.*, 227.

After Peale's museum moved from the State House in 1827–1828, the second floor was rented to the United States government for judicial purposes.²⁰² Alterations were made under the direction of the architect John Haviland to adapt the space for its new use. The long room was again obliterated, and the western portion of the upper floor was made into one large room for the use of the United States Circuit and District Courts. The partitions in the eastern portion apparently were retained; the northern room became the jury room for the court and the southern room the office of its clerk.²⁰³

²⁰² On December 11, 1828 the joint committee of the Councils on the State House and Independence Square was intrusted to inquire into the expediency of renting the second floor to the United States. Hazard's *Register* 2: 361. On December 24, 1828, after obtaining plans and an estimate from Haviland, the committee reported in favor of leasing the space for ten years. *Phila. Gazette*, Dec. 26, 1829.

²⁰³ Scharf and Westcott, *History of Phila.* 3: 1791. The United States paid an annual rental of \$600 for the first six years, and \$1,500 for each of the last four years. Hazard's *Register* 5: 23; *Journal of Select Council, 1839–1840*, app. 26. After 1840 the annual rental of \$2,000. *Ibid.*, 1843–1844, app. 89. In an undated draft of a letter to Thomas Kittera, Haviland said that "it is indispensibly necessary to take away the present trussed partition immediately over the Mayors Court [west room] which is suspended from the roof and supports the floor, to enable me to do this I have introduced two castiron columns of sufficient thickness cast in one entire [blk ?] resting on a solid foundation of masonry. . . ." Haviland MS., 2, University of Penna. Library. Haviland's plans for those alterations have not been found. *Poulson's Advertiser*, Feb. 25, 1830, described



FIG. 17. Lafayette's arrival at Independence Hall, September 28, 1824, showing triumphal arch. Courtesy of Phila. Free Library.

This occupancy of the State House by the Federal courts continued until 1854. In that year, upon the consolidation of the City and Districts, it was decided that a larger space was required for their meetings. The United States Courts were asked to remove from the second floor of the State House, and the Courtroom on the west was occupied by the Common Council. On the east the partition between the former offices of the Court clerks was removed and a single room was fitted up for the Select Council. The Councils occupied the upper floor until 1895.²⁰⁴

EVOLUTION OF A SHRINE

1. LAFAYETTE'S VISIT

Prior to 1824, as has been shown above, there was little, if any, reverence or regard for the State House; but in that year the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to Philadelphia awakened an interest in the building which, with the exception of brief periods of backsliding, has persisted to this day.

Elaborate preparations were made for the visit of the celebrated Frenchman, much of it centering around the State House which became the principal center of interest. Across Chestnut Street in front of the State House was erected a huge arch, "constructed of frame work covered with canvass, and painted in perfect imitation of stone . . . designed by the architect William Strickland." A covered way led to the door of the

the accommodations of the courts: "The upper story of the State House, formerly occupied by the Museum, has been leased for the accommodation of the United States Court and its offices. The repairs and renovations for that purpose are considerably advanced under the designs of Mr. Haviland. The court room will occupy the west end of the story, extending from Chestnut street to the yard. Next to it, on Chestnut street, is the jury room, measuring 22 by 20 feet. In the eastern end is the clerk's office 34 by 20 feet, and in the rear of it, facing the square, the marshals office 25 by 20 feet. The judge's rostrum will be beautifully ornamented with Corinthian columns and pilasters."

²⁰⁴ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 3: 1791.

State House.²⁰⁵ The Assembly room, then called the Hall of Independence, was completely redecorated:

The Hall of Independence has been fitted up in the most splendid manner. The room is 40 feet square, the walls and ceilings painted a stone color, the windows hung with scarlet and blue drapery studded with stars. In the east side stands a statue of the immortal Washington, in a recess which was formerly occupied by the chair of the Speaker of the first Congress. Behind the statue there is an azure star drapery suspended from spears and wreathes. To the right and left of the statue hang the Portraits of William Penn, Franklin and Robert Morris and Francis Hopkinson. The intermediate spaces are filled with the portraits of Greene, Wayne, Montgomery, Hamilton, Gates, Rochambeau, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and Gov. McKean.

Over the door of entrance is placed the celebrated Portrait of Washington by R. Peale, relieved on each side by crimson and azure drapery suspended from spears and laurel wreathes. On the right and left of the entrance are placed the Portraits of Jefferson, Hancock, Adams, Madison, Monroe, and the Venerable Charles Thompson. On the north and south of the windows are draped to the floor with crimson and Azure, the carpet of similar colors, and the furniture of mahogany tastefully and appropriately disposed.²⁰⁶

Lafayette was formally received at the "Hall of Independence" by the Mayor and other dignitaries on September 28. On the following days during his week-long visit, it served as his "levee" room. Here he received addresses from special groups, such as the clergy, the American Philosophical Society, the bar association, the children of the schools, and many others.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ *American Daily Advertiser*, Sept. 30, 1824. This was the chief arch of thirteen designed by Strickland and built along the four-mile route from Frankford. The chief arch was modeled after the arch of Septimius Severus in Rome. Thomas Sully painted the coat of arms of the city for the arch and the wooden figures of Justice and Wisdom by William Rush were also placed on it. Gilchrist, A. A., William Strickland . . . , *Gen. Mag. and Hist. Chron.* 54: 53, 1951. Rush's statues were placed in Independence Square in 1825. *Saturday Evening Post*, Sept. 5, 1825.

²⁰⁶ *National Gazette*, Sept. 25, 1824.

²⁰⁷ Levasseur, A., *Lafayette in America, in 1824 and 1825, or, journal of a voyage to the United States* 1: 133-139 [trans. by John D. Goodman]. Phila., Carey and Lea, 1829.

2. RECONSTRUCTION AND RESTORATION

The interest in the State House engendered by the visit of Lafayette was not permitted to die. On February 7, 1828, a committee of the City Councils was named "to cause the turret in the rear of the State House to be surveyed, and to procure a plan and estimate of the cost of carrying it up a sufficient height to place a clock and bell therein."²⁰⁸ The Committee proceeded to procure estimates and plans from architects and artisans. On February 28, at a meeting of the Councils, the committee recommended that William Strickland provide the architectural plan, John Wilbank the new bell, and Isaiah Lukens the clock. Strickland's plan was said to be ". . . in fact a restoration of the spire originally erected with the building, and standing there on the 4th July 1776."²⁰⁹

The committee's report precipitated a most heated discussion in the Councils which continued until March 15. On that day the Councils agreed to accept Strickland's plan and to purchase a clock and bell. The sum of \$12,000 was appropriated for the entire project. Work was begun directly and the steeple was completed that summer.²¹⁰

Strickland's steeple was not an exact replica of the original, but it may be considered a restoration since it follows the general design of its predecessor. The principal deviations were the installation of a clock in the steeple and the use of more ornamentation.

The old clock and its bell, no longer needed, were sold to the Roman Catholic Church of St. Augustine.²¹¹ Both were destroyed by the burning of the building in May 1844 during the riots in which two Roman Catholic churches were burned to the ground.²¹²

Within two years after the rebuilding of the steeple, interest was aroused in the restoration of the Assembly room, then referred to as the Hall of Independence. On December 9, 1830, the subject of the restoration of this room "to its ancient Form" was considered by the Councils.²¹³ Shortly afterwards John Haviland, architect, was requested by the committee on the State House to investigate the matter. His report, dated March 29, 1831, was submitted to the Councils in the following April:

²⁰⁸ Hazard's *Register* 1: 152.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.* 1: 152-154.

²¹⁰ *Ibid.* 1: 176; Gilchrist, Agnes Addison, *William Strickland . . .*, 78-79, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950. William Plankard, a carpenter, was killed while working on the steeple. Hazard's *Register* 2: 83.

²¹¹ The clock was sold for two hundred and fifty dollars and the bell for four hundred. On January 28, 1830 the Councils remitted the cost of the clock. Hazard's *Register* 5: 72, 87.

²¹² See Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 1: 663-675 for information on the riots of 1844. Fragments of the bell were saved and another bell was cast. This bell is now located at Villanova College.

²¹³ *Poulson's Daily Advertiser*, Dec. 9, 1830.

In compliance with your request, I have examined "the Hall of the Declaration of Independence," with a view of reinstating it with its original architectural embellishments. From the best information I can obtain of its former style of finish, it appears to have been similar to the Mayor's Court room in its general features: a gallery supported by small columns, occupied the western side, and a chair with its dressings, raised on a platform on the eastern side; the precise detail of which I find it impossible to obtain authority sufficient to recommend its introduction; the materials we have are in good taste, corresponding with the bold Roman architecture of the staircase and vestibule, and constitutes nearly the whole finish; the last parts are so trifling and imperfect, that, although they would complete the portrait, they would encumber it with useless and defective features.

The arches on either side of the entrances, were formerly open, similar to the one through which you pass to the staircase—it would add much to the magnitude and beauty of the two rooms if these apertures could be restored; which might be effected by using them jointly for some public purpose; such as an Exchange, Athenaeum, Exhibition, or Town Meeting Room, that would not encumber the walls or conceal their architectural features.

Your subscriber therefore most respectfully recommends reinstating the room with the general finish of pilaster, entablature, pedestals, and window dressings, corresponding with the Mayor's Court room, vestibule and stairs, which he is of opinion was the original finish of the room, at the period of the Declaration of Independence.

The estimated cost of the whole alteration including the painting and plastering is twelve hundred dollars.²¹⁴

The restoration of the room was a most welcome development to the local citizens. One of them, visiting the building in October 1831, was surprised at the confusion, but was relieved to learn that "It was undergoing repairs in order to render the appearance similar to that which it bore when our ancestors there assembled on the 4th of July, 1776." He investigated the work and described the plans, "On the east end of the room, fronting the entrance to the room on the west, it is proposed to fix, in a place set apart for that purpose, the Declaration of Independence with the facsimiles of the signers painted on canvas."²¹⁵

3. THE ANTEBELLUM YEARS AND THE CIVIL WAR

For a few years after the restoration, the "Hall of Independence" apparently was little used. On January 28, 1836, the Committee on City Property reported to the Select Council, "that Independence Hall should not be permitted to remain in its unfurnished state; but that it should be neatly fitted up with such furniture as would be consistent with the venerated Hall." Two years earlier the Councils had ordered that the room be furnished

²¹⁴ Hazard's *Register* 7: 264-265. According to Hazard's notes to Watson's *Annals*, Haviland "reinstated such portions of the panelling as had been removed, but fortunately preserved in the attic of the State House, and only eked out the missing portions." Watson, *op. cit.* 3: 211. Available information tends to prove that Haviland erred in regard to the gallery and open arches. No trace of Haviland's plans has been found, however, and it is not possible to give a detailed account of his work.

²¹⁵ *Poulson's Daily Advertiser*, Oct. 8, 1831.

"in the manner it was at the time of the declaration; but the Committee finding it impossible to execute the direction, it has since remained without furniture, and almost as a lumber room." The committee then suggested that "the room be occupied by the Mayor, when not in the office, and our own citizens as well as strangers, would at all times be enabled to visit a place of deep interest."²¹⁶

Interest in the Hall as shown by the multitude of applications to the Councils for its use and the growing veneration of the room caused that body to adopt a policy governing its use. In November 1836 the Councils passed an ordinance declaring that "it shall not be lawful to allow the Hall of Independence to be used for any purposes of public exhibitions, or any display for which money should be demanded for admittance, without permission therefor being previously obtained from the Councils."²¹⁷

The use of the room has always been a knotty problem. During this period it served many purposes. In 1830 the Academy of Fine Arts rented the room for three months "for an exhibition of pictures." Benjamin West, the son of the painter, received permission in 1841 to exhibit there a large painting by his father representing the visit of Paul and Barnabas to Lystia. Charles Shaeffer exhibited in 1836 statues of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.²¹⁸

Following the precedent established by Lafayette's visit, the principal use of the Hall was as a levee room for distinguished visitors to the city. On June 10, 1833, President Jackson received the citizens at the Hall. Henry Clay followed the President a few months later. During the next quarter century, levees were held here by Presidents Van Buren, Harrison, Polk, and Tyler, as well as other famous personages.²¹⁹

During the decade of the 1840's, the development of the idea of a shrine continued. In 1846 a "Register of Visitors" was purchased for Independence Hall.²²⁰ In addition, the State House was thoroughly repaired and given a complete painting. A local newspaper noted that the walls of the center hall, previously whitewashed with lime, were now being painted. "This is a great improvement, as hereafter they can be washed regularly with water; and paint and all kept clean."²²¹

²¹⁶ *Journal of Common Council* . . . , 1835-1836, 83.

²¹⁷ *Journal of Select Council* . . . , 1836-1837, app. 4.

²¹⁸ Hazard's *Register* 6: 204; *Journal of Common Council* . . . , 1841-1842, 85; *Journal of Select Council* . . . , 1835-1836, 74.

²¹⁹ Hazard's *Register* 11: 377-378, 1833; 12: 351, 1833; *Journal of Common Council*, 1839-1840, 8; *Public Ledger*, June 12, 1843; Westcott, Thompson, *Historic Mansions of Philadelphia*, 126-127.

²²⁰ *Journal of Common Council*, Oct. 16, 1846-Oct. 7, 1847, 96.

²²¹ *The United States Gazette*, Nov. 14, 1846. An account of S. and R. S. Wilson for painting of State House in 1846 includes four coats of paint on the steeple, gilding figures on the clock faces, and the "ball, vane, and cap," painting "Independence room," "graining doors of Independence and Court rooms, and

By the 1850's, and during the critical years of the Civil War, veneration for the State House was even more evident. In 1852 the Councils resolved to celebrate July 4 annually "in the said State House, known as Independence Hall. . . ." ²²² This idea of a patriotic shrine was expressed on July 4, 1858, by the famed orator Edward Everett in his usual grandiloquent manner:

Let the rain of heaven distill gently on its roof and the storms of winter beat softly on its door. As each successive generation of those who have benefitted by the great Declaration made within it shall make their pilgrimage to that shrine, may they not think it unseemly to call its walls Salvation and its gates Praise.²²³

The list of famous visitors during these years would be entirely too long for this paper. During the visit of the famed Hungarian patriot, Louis Kossuth, in 1851, the room again served for a reception.²²⁴ Presidents Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan also held levees in the east room.²²⁵ President-elect Lincoln on February 22, 1861, raised the flag of the United States over "the Hall of Independence" and was received in the historic room.²²⁶ His brief remarks at this time have not been surpassed in stating the significance of the room:

I am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live. You have kindly suggested to me that in my hands is the task of restoring peace to the present distracted condition of the country. I can say in return, Sir, that all the political sentiments I entertain have been drawn, so far as I have been able to draw them, from the sentiments which originated and were given to the world from this hall. I have never had a feeling politically that did not spring from the sentiments embodied in the Declaration of Independence.²²⁷

Meanwhile, efforts of a more concrete nature were undertaken to develop a patriotic shrine. In the fall of 1851 the Select Council passed a resolution inviting the thirteen original states to appoint delegates to assemble in Independence Hall on July 4, 1852, to consider a plan to erect in the square one or more monuments to commemorate the Declaration of Independence. This convention met as called, but its deliberations, for various reasons, proved fruitless.²²⁸

scraping walls, ceiling, and staircase of State-house, and painting same." *Journal of Common Council*, Oct. 16, 1846-Oct. 7, 1847, 100.

²²² *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1851-Oct. 9, 1852, 230.

²²³ Quoted in Westcott, *Historic Mansions*, 128.

²²⁴ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.* 1: 702.

²²⁵ *Journal of Common Council*, Nov. 12, 1856-May 7, 1857, 105, 367, 536.

²²⁶ For information on plans for 1861 celebration of Washington's birthday, see *ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1860-June 27, 1861, 157; for description of Lincoln's see *Public Ledger*, Feb. 22, 1861.

²²⁷ Speech is quoted in full in *ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1861.

²²⁸ *Journal of Common Council*, Oct. 11, 1850-Oct. 9, 1851, 240-242, 249; 1851-1852, 228-231.

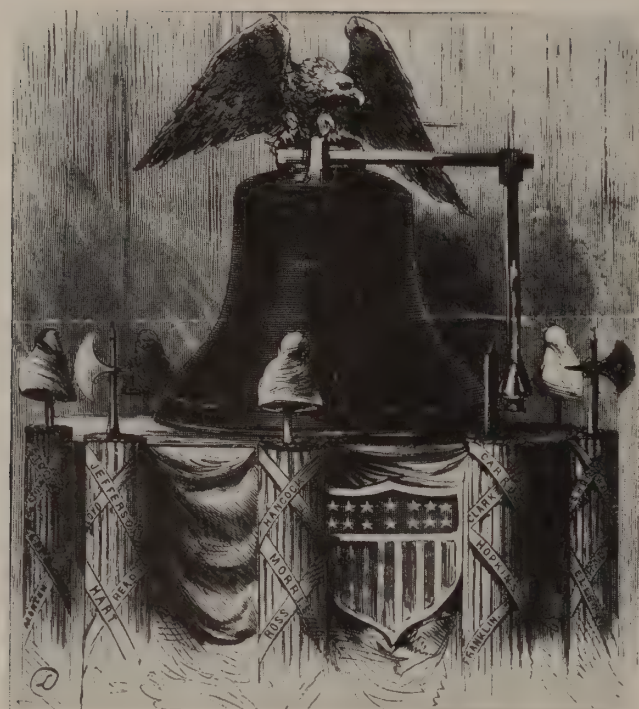


FIG. 18. The Liberty Bell on a thirteen-sided platform with a spread eagle on top, displayed in the Assembly room. From *Harper's Weekly* for July 10, 1869.

Although the convention was unsuccessful, the preparations for the meeting saw the old State House bell, which had been for the most part forgotten after the bell of 1828 was purchased, removed from the steeple and placed on a temporary pedestal in the east room.²²⁹ At this time the bell was called "old Independence bell" even though the name "Liberty bell" had been used earlier.²³⁰ After being put on exhibition in 1852, the bell has been displayed in several ways. At one time it was placed on a thirteen-sided platform with a spread eagle on top. Later it hung suspended by a chain of thirteen links in the stairwell of the tower. For a brief period the bell was exhibited in the west room. Another time saw it placed on its wooden frame, and later encased in glass in the tower entrance. Finally it was removed from the glass case and placed on a metal support near the south doorway. In addition to its travels within the building, the bell has made several excursions about the nation. Since being placed on display, the Liberty

²²⁹ The *Penna. Inquirer* for July 2, 1852 reported, "The Committee on city property, have caused the old Independence Bell to be lowered from its elevation in the State House steeple, and placed in the Hall of Independence, on an octagon pedestal, covered with green baize, where it will remain hereafter. . . ."

²³⁰ Rosewater in his authoritative book on the bell states that the earliest use of the name "Liberty Bell" was in antislavery propaganda in the 1840's. The illustration of the bell in Benson J. Lossing's *Pictorial field book of the Revolution* 2: 66, N. Y., Harper & Bros., 1860, drawn in 1848, bears the caption "Liberty Bell." Rosewater, Victor, *The Liberty Bell its history and significance*, 194-196, N. Y., D. Appleton & Co., 1926.

Bell has grown in importance until it is now the most venerated symbol of patriotism in America.²³¹

During the years after the restoration of the east room in 1831 a few paintings and other objects were purchased by or presented to the city for exhibition. One of the first acquisitions was the wooden statue of George Washington by William Rush which long occupied the east end of the room.²³² It was not until 1854, however, that the city made any real effort to establish an historical collection for Independence Hall. In that year the city purchased at the sale of Charles Willson Peale's gallery more than one hundred oil portraits of Colonial, Revolutionary, and early Republican figures.²³³

Following the acquisition of Peale's portraits, the east room was refurnished and the portraits hung on the walls, and on February 22, 1855, the room was opened to the public by the Mayor.²³⁴ From that time on many relics and curios were accepted by the city for display in the Hall. Catalogues of the paintings and other objects on display were placed in Independence Hall, and an attempt was made to have erected a sign identifying the Hall of Independence for the assistance of visitors.²³⁵

²³¹ *Ibid.* 133-140; Frey, Carroll, The strange fortunes of the Liberty Bell, *American Heritage* 3: 49.

²³² Letter of Rush to Thomas Kittera, chairman of the committee on the State House and Independence Square, dated Sept. 6, 1831, in Hazard's *Register* 8: 82, 1831. A description of the room in 1837 noted: "There is a curious statue of Washington in Independence Hall, carved in wood by Rush, and said to be an excellent likeness. Several fine pictures by Sully and Inman, are also deposited in this apartment." *A guide to the lions of Phila.*, 20, 1837.

²³³ *Journal of Common Council*, June 12, 1854-Dec. 2, 1854, 436-437, 637. The portraits were purchased on Oct. 6, 1854.

²³⁴ On Feb. 20, 1855 it was reported to the Common Council that the room had been renovated, refurnished, "and a large number of portraits of distinguished men of the Revolution placed upon its walls." On Washington's birthday following the Mayor was invited by the Councils to make an address at the opening of the Hall to the public. *Journal of Common Council*, Dec. 7, 1854-May 7, 1855, 320.

²³⁵ Catalogues were ordered on October 30, 1856. *Ibid.*, May 12, 1856-Nov. 16, 1856, 526. On September 20, 1858 a motion was made to direct the Commissioner of City Property "to



FIG. 19. Elisha Kent Kane's body lying in state in the Assembly room, Independence Hall, 1857. Courtesy of Phila. Free Library.



FIG. 20. Independence Hall group, 1876. Engraving by Poleni.

An effort was even made to ascertain "what became of the Revolutionary furniture belonging in Independence Hall; [and] what means are necessary to be taken to have same returned to the Hall."²³⁶ Unfortunately, the report of the committee which made this investigation has not yet been found.

Several amusing facts have come to light concerning use of the Hall in this period. For instance, that the cellar was used as a dog pound until 1851,²³⁷ also, that a refreshment stand was once located in the central hall, against which there were many angry protests.²³⁸

have a suitable inscription placed over the door of the Hall of Independence, by which strangers may be able to designate the room in which the Declaration of Independence was signed." This motion failed to pass. *Ibid.* May 10, 1858–Nov. 4, 1858, 345.

²³⁶ Resolution of the Councils passed January 6, 1859. *Ibid.*, Nov. 11, 1858–May 5, 1859, 247.

²³⁷ "Resolved that the cellar of Independence Hall shall not, from this time forth, be used as a receptacle for dogs taken up under the Ordinances; and that the Committee on Police be instructed to provide, forthwith, another receptacle for that purpose." Passed by the Councils on July 3, 1851. *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1850–Oct. 9, 1851, 220.

²³⁸ On January 17, 1861 a protest from "sundry citizens against the vending of coffee and refreshments in the vestibule of the

During the Civil War, the Hall served a solemn purpose. From 1861 on, the bodies of not a few local soldiers killed in the war, and in 1865 the body of President Lincoln lay in state in the east room.²³⁹ Such use of the room, in truth, was not new, for in 1848 John Quincy Adams, in 1852 Henry Clay, and in 1857 Elisha

State House" was referred to the Committee on City Property. *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1860–June 27, 1861, 87. Apparently the vending continued for on June 4, 1868 Mrs. Mary Gould received a permit to occupy a refreshment stand "in the passage-way of Independence Hall." *Ibid.*, 1868 1: 431, app. 535–536.

²³⁹ The following soldiers lay in state in Independence Hall during the Civil War: Col. E. D. Baker, Nov. 1861 (*ibid.*, July 1, 1860–Jan. 3, 1862, 109); Major-Gen. David B. Birney, Oct. 1864 (*ibid.*, 1864 2: 158–160); Maj. Thomas Hawksworth, Jan. 1863 (*ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1863–July 2, 1863, 26–27); Maj. Adolph G. Rosingarten, Jan. 1863 (*ibid.*, 33); Col. Francis Mahler, July 1863 (*ibid.*, July 9, 1863–Dec. 31, 1863, 30). In addition to this sad use, the Hall was used for receptions tendered Lieut. Slemmer, "the gallant defender of Fort Pickens," Major-Gen. George G. McClellan, Major-Gen. George G. Meade, Major-Gen. Winfield Scott, and Lieut. Gen. U. S. Grant. *Journal of Select Council, 1860–1861*, 224; *Journal of Common Council, Jan. 5, 1863–July 2, 1863*, 15; 1864 1: 38, 67; 1865 1: 330. For Lincoln lying in state in Independence Hall, see *Phila. Inquirer*, April 24 and 25, 1865.



FIG. 21. The Assembly room (Declaration chamber) showing its cluttered condition prior to the restoration of 1876. From Etting, Frank M., *An Historical account of the Old State House of Pennsylvania* . . . , 165.

Kent Kane, the Arctic explorer, had lain in state there.²⁴⁰

In 1860 a movement was begun by the children of the public schools of Philadelphia to erect a monument to Washington. When the fund was nearly raised, Councils provided a space on the pavement directly opposite the Chestnut Street entrance. The statue, executed by J. A. Bailey, was unveiled on July 5, 1869.²⁴¹

4. THE CENTENNIAL RESTORATION

Little beyond actual maintenance of the buildings seems to have occurred until 1871 when Joseph Leed proposed to the Councils that Independence Square and buildings be made a memorial forever.²⁴² In the next year, with the approach of the Centennial of the Independence of the United States, a committee for the restoration of Independence Hall was named by the Mayor.²⁴³ In its first report, submitted in 1873, the committee described the condition of the Independence Chamber:

²⁴⁰ Westcott, *Historic Mansions*, 126. Charles Sumner lay in state in Independence Hall in 1874. *Journal of Common Council*, 1874 1: 204.

²⁴¹ Scattergood, David, *Hand Book of the State House* . . . , 34-35, Phila., publ. by the author, ca. 1890. Only one other statue stands in the Square, that of Commodore John Barry, donated by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick in 1907.

²⁴² *Journal of Common Council*, 1871 1: app. 604-623. The only major change occurred following an order of the Select Council on April 29, 1863, to repair the furniture and to lay a marble floor in the Hall of Independence. The Council felt that this work was necessary because the condition of the Hall "is such as to reflect discredit upon the city of Philadelphia. . . ." *Journal of Select Council*, Jan. 5, 1863-July 2, 1863, 236.

²⁴³ The committee consisted of Frank M. Etting, Morton McMichael, W. E. Littleton, Jno. L. Shoemaker, A Wilson Henszey, J. H. Pugh. [First] *Report of the Committee on Restoration of Independence Hall*, 7, n.p., n.d. (ca. 1873).



FIG. 22. Assembly room of Independence Hall, 1876, following restoration. Courtesy Phila. Free Library.

We found the doors, cornices, wainscoting, and the architectural characteristics of the room completely concealed beneath a mass of pictures of every kind, while the floor contained the dilapidated furniture rejected by former Councils, and one of the windows was barricaded by the block of marble ordered by the City of Philadelphia as its contribution to the Washington National Monument. This last . . . we caused to be transmitted to its destination. . . .

Of the original equipment of the Hall, it appeared that not one single piece of furniture remained after the fitting up of 1802. . . .²⁴⁴

The committee entered upon its duties with energy. Furniture believed to have been in the Assembly room in 1776 was gathered from the state capital at Harrisburg and from private sources. Portraits of the "founding fathers" were hung in the room. The president's dais was rebuilt in the east end of the room, and pillars, thought to have supported the ceiling, were erected. The red paint, which had been applied to the exterior of the building, was removed from the Chestnut Street side. When the accumulated layers of paint were removed from the walls of the interior, on the first floor, the long-hidden beauty of the carved ornamentation was again revealed.²⁴⁵

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

²⁴⁵ The first report of the committee was submitted on June 7, 1873, the second on April 29, 1874, and the third on January 18, 1875. See Etting, *op. cit.*, 166-189 for an account of the restoration. According to Etting (p. 172) the pillars were placed in the room on the authority of Horace Binney who remembered seeing them before the "modernization" of 1818 or 1819. As shown above, the subaltern, who visited the Hall in 1832, mentions "the pillars which supported the ceiling" having been removed when the room was "modernized." See note 196. On the other hand, no pillars are visible in the Pine and Savage painting, "Congress Voting Independence," which was executed in the room in 1784 (see fig. 8), and Haviland does not mention them in his letter of 1831 regarding the restoration of the room. Without more clear-cut documentary evidence, it appears probable that the room did not have pillars supporting the ceiling prior to 1876.

After the committee had renovated the entire first floor of Independence Hall, it made a survey of the objects and relics in the building. A formal report was presented to the Mayor and Councils recommending the establishment of a museum in which to preserve objects associated with the principal events in American History. This report, approved on June 12, 1873, founded the National Museum. Much effort was exerted in collecting material for exhibit purposes.²⁴⁶

During the Centennial restoration project, a large bell, weighing 13,000 pounds, and a new clock were given the city by Henry Seybert for the steeple of Independence Hall. The old clock and bell, installed in 1828, were moved to, and set up in, the Town Hall of Germantown.²⁴⁷

5. THE RESTORATION OF 1896-1898

With the close of the Centennial celebration, Independence Hall experienced a period of quiet, disturbed only by the increasing number of visitors. Then toward the close of the nineteenth century, another restoration cycle began, but its emphasis was quite different from any of the past. Except for the replacement of the steeple in 1828, all restoration work heretofore had been concentrated in the east, or Assembly, room on the first floor. Little attention was paid to the rest of the building, except for periodic repairs and alterations serving current purposes. But interest shifted from the east room to the remainder of the building, finally, in the 1890's. An ordinance of the Common and Select Councils, approved by the Mayor December 26, 1895, called for the restoration of Independence Square to its appearance during the Revolution.²⁴⁸ A committee of city officers concerned with public buildings and an advisory committee of leading citizens were named by the Mayor to carry out the work. On March 19, 1896, a resolution of the Councils granted permission to the Philadelphia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution to proceed with the restoration of the old Council chamber on the second floor of Independence Hall.²⁴⁹

The committees and the Daughters of the American Revolution between 1896 and 1898 carried out a most extensive program of restoration. The office buildings designed by Mills were replaced by wings and arcades which were more like those of the eighteenth century. The first floor rooms of Independence Hall were restored and the Daughters of the American Revolution attempted to restore the entire second floor to its Colonial appearance by reconstruction of the long room,

the vestibule and the two side rooms. Fireplaces, long bricked up, were opened and rebuilt, windows, closed by the Mills' additions of 1813, were again cut through and provided with sashes, and doors, forgotten for years, were located and reconstructed. The arches leading into the Supreme Court Chamber on the first floor were again opened. A dummy clockcase, similar to that of the Colonial period, was rebuilt on the west wall, but the planned moving of the clock back to its eighteenth century location was not carried out.²⁵⁰ With the completion of this work despite certain minor errors, the old State House was returned for the first time in almost a century, to an approximation of its original design and that presented during the American Revolution.

During the nineteenth century, the program of restoration and preservation was concerned largely with work on Independence Hall with little thought being given the entire group of historical structures. In fact, these buildings were directed to be demolished by an act passed by the General Assembly and approved on August 5, 1870. Fortunately this direction was not carried out at that time, and it was finally repealed in 1895.²⁵¹

²⁵⁰ In addition to work on Independence Hall, the new courthouse on Sixth Street south of Congress Hall was ordered demolished. The Law Department of the University of Pennsylvania, which used the building, was given notice to vacate. Demolition apparently began on June 15, 1898. *Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, 1896*, 152-153, 301-302. Mr. Frank M. Riter, Director of the Department of Public Safety, prepared a detailed report of the restoration work of 1895-1896 which was published in *The Times Sunday* (Phila.) for July 3, 1896.

²⁵¹ The rapid growth of the city made the buildings on Independence Square totally inadequate and new municipal buildings became an absolute necessity. The Councils apparently assumed the new buildings should be located on Independence Square. On December 3, 1896, they passed an ordinance appointing commissioners for the erection of the new public buildings for the courts and the city and county offices. This ordinance specified that these buildings "shall be erected on Independence Square [and,] that upon completion of the buildings . . . all the present buildings on Independence Square, shall be taken down and removed by the said Commissioners." *Ordinances and Joint Resolutions of the City of Philadelphia from January 1 to December 31, 1868*, 571-573, Phila., 1869. A storm of protest led to an appeal to the Legislature, and the state intervened. An act of the Legislature, approved August 5, 1870, directed that the new buildings should be erected in either Washington Square or Penn Square, "as may be determined by a vote of the legally qualified voters. . . ." The act also specified that upon completion of the new buildings "All the present buildings on Independence square, except Independence Hall, shall be removed. . . ." *Laws of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed at the session of 1871*, (Act 1404), app. 1548-1550. Fortunately, the voters determined that the new building should be erected in Penn Square. Upon completion of the new city hall, the demolition of the buildings on Independence Square was not carried out. The act of 1870 was finally repealed by the Legislature on July 3, 1895. *Laws of 1895*, (Act 456), 604. See Lingelbach, William E., *The Story of "Philosophical Hall," Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 94: 195-196, 1950 (reprinted, with additions, in this volume, p. 43).

²⁴⁶ See first report of restoration committee, 1.

²⁴⁷ *Journal of Common Council*, 1877 1: 392.

²⁴⁸ *Journal of Select Council*, Oct. 2, 1895-April 2, 1896, app. 2: 78.

²⁴⁹ The Philadelphia Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution was granted permission to restore the old Council Chamber under the supervision and control of the Director of Public Safety. *Ibid.* 2: 302.



FIG. 23. Recent view of the Assembly room (also called the Declaration chamber) in Independence Hall.

6. THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

With the twentieth century, emphasis shifted from the main building to the remainder of the group. Although some restoration work had been done in Congress Hall by the Colonial Dames of America in 1896, their efforts were confined to the Senate chamber and one of the committee rooms on the upper floor.²⁵² The complete restoration of Congress Hall, however, was not undertaken at this time.

It was most fortunate that an organization with the knowledge of the American Institute of Architects became interested in the restoration of Congress Hall. Beginning in 1900 a meticulous study was made by the Philadelphia Chapter of this organization of the documentary evidence available on the building, and a comprehensive report was submitted to the city officials concerned. Here the matter rested because of the lack of adequate funds for the project.²⁵³

The architects continued to advocate the restoration, and in 1910 funds were made available. The work was begun early in 1912 by the city under the auspices of the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and was completed in the fall of the following year. On October 26, 1913, the building, restored to its appearance when the home of the United States Congress, was rededicated with appropriate ceremonies.²⁵⁴

The restoration of Congress Hall at Sixth Street brought into strong contrast the condition of the Supreme Court Building (Old City Hall) at Fifth Street. For many years the architects and other interested groups urged the City to complete the restoration of the entire Independence Hall group by carrying out the

plans for the Supreme Court building, but the work was not finished until 1922.²⁵⁵

These two restoration projects together with the completion of the restoration of the second floor of Independence Hall, and the stairs to the tower, completed the work on the group of buildings under the city's administration.

THE INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

With the completion of the restoration projects, the buildings on Independence Square presented an harmonious group of structures in substantially the appearance of their years of greatest glory. The neighborhood in which they were situated, however, had degenerated into a most unsightly area. The improvement of the environs of Independence Hall, containing a large concentration of significant historical buildings, was the next logical development.

This movement to preserve the historical buildings in Old Philadelphia, and, incidentally, to provide a more appropriate setting for these buildings, had long been considered. During World War II the nation wide movement for the conservation of cultural resources became particularly active in Philadelphia and a good deal was done to coordinate the work of different groups. In 1942 a group of interested persons, many of whom represented over fifty civic and patriotic organizations, met in the Hall of the American Philosophical Society and organized the "Independence Hall Association." This Association was the spearhead of a vigorous campaign which resulted in stimulating official action to bring about the establishment of the Independence National Historical Park Project.²⁵⁶

Conceived as a means of reclaiming some of the neighborhood around Independence Square and to preserve the many significant historical buildings in the area for the benefit and enjoyment of the American people, the historical park will be developed by the concerted efforts of the City of Philadelphia, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the United States of America.

In 1945 the State Government authorized the expenditure of funds to acquire the three city blocks between Fifth and Sixth Streets from the Delaware River bridgehead at Race Street to Independence Square. This project of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, officially designated "Independence Mall," provides for the demolition of the buildings within the authorized area for a great concourse to form a dignified approach to Inde-

²⁵⁵ Restoration of the Supreme Court Building was delayed by the First World War. A description of the dedication ceremonies may be found in the *Public Ledger* for May 3, 1922.

²⁵⁶ For an excellent discussion of the movement to establish a national historical park in Philadelphia, see Lingelbach, William E., *Old Philadelphia: redevelopment and conservation*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 93: 179-207, 1949; and Peterson, Charles E., *The Independence National Historical Park Project*, *American-German Review* 16: 7-11, 1950.

²⁵² *Public Ledger*, Sept. 21, 1913.

²⁵³ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁴ *The Philadelphia Record*, Oct. 26, 1913. In 1934 the Speaker's rostrum and the circular ramped platform for the members were rebuilt with Civil Works Administration funds. *Evening Bulletin*, Jan. 17, 1934. See Reeder, *op. cit.*, 595 for criticism of restoration of Congress Hall.



FIG. 25. Aerial view of Independence Square showing demolition of buildings to the north in preparation for the construction of the Independence Mall by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Courtesy of the National Park Service.

pendence Square. The plans provide for spacious underground parking facilities, an information center, and other conveniences for the comfort and enjoyment of visitors. At the present time, the buildings in the first block (between Chestnut and Market Streets) have been demolished and the land is being prepared for landscaping.

The Federal area was defined by an act of the Congress (Public Law 795—80th Congress) after the matter had been studied intensively by a Federal commission named in 1946. The principal area will be the three city blocks between Walnut and Chestnut Streets (fig. 24, area A), with subsidiary areas on either side to include important historical sites, such as the property adjacent to old Christ Church (area E), the site of Franklin's home (area C), and an area leading from Walnut Street to old St. Mary's Church (area B). A

surprising number of significant buildings are included within the park boundaries. The first and second Banks of the United States, the Philadelphia Exchange, and the Bishop White and Dilworth-Todd-Moylan houses have been, or are in the process of being, acquired by the Federal Government. Carpenters' Hall and Christ Church will not be purchased, but their preservation and interpretation have been assured through special contracts with the Department of the Interior.

The contribution of the City of Philadelphia to the historical park is by far the most vital. On January 1, 1951, the custody and operation of the Independence Hall group of buildings and the square was transferred, under the terms of a special contract, from the City to the National Park Service. The title to the property will remain in the City. Earlier, in 1943 the buildings had been designated a National Historic Site by the Department of the Interior. Since assuming custody of the Independence Hall group, the National Park Service has carried out an extensive program of rehabilitation of these historic structures, and, many facilities have been provided for the dissemination of the history of the Independence Hall group, and the other structures in the park, to visitors. In addition, an extensive program of historical and architectural research has been undertaken. The facts gathered in this research will enable plans to be developed which will assure the maximum benefit to be derived from a visit to this most important historical area.

Thus the Old State House has survived more than two centuries; during these years the English colonies grew, successfully revolted from the mother country, and established a new form of government which has persevered to this day. In all of these events Independence Hall and its associated buildings have played a conspicuous part. It is fortunate that these old structures have survived, sometimes through accident rather than willful design, so that they may serve as tangible illustrations of this nation's history for the inspiration of this and succeeding generations of Americans.

PHILOSOPHICAL HALL

The Home of the American Philosophical Society¹

WILLIAM E. LINGELBACH

Librarian, American Philosophical Society; Professor Emeritus of Modern European History, University of Pennsylvania

I

HISTORIC BUILDINGS

HISTORIC buildings have always held a prominent place in both cultural and political history. Adding atmosphere and significant expression to the story of the past, they speak a language quite as eloquent as do written documents. In some instances they rise conspicuously from the local to the higher levels of national and even international significance. Appreciation of this has varied greatly from time to time. In general, however, an instinctive feeling for the importance of historic sites and buildings has prevailed in every age from the building of the pyramids of Egypt to the determined efforts of war-stricken Europe to salvage the shattered remains of its historic shrines. About the middle of the last century this feeling became very pronounced in intellectual and artistic circles, and gradually found expression in a widespread movement for conservation and restoration. Archaeologists, historians, architects, and engineers following the lead of the eminent French scholar, Viollet-le-Duc, developed rules and canons to govern the process, till there emerged, if not a new science, at least a new discipline. Historic survivals in the form of buildings and other shrines were heralded as important historical sources—concrete evidence of the continuity of history, interpreting the past to successive generations in terms young and old could understand.

In our country the movement, now closely associated with city planning, has grown rapidly in recent years. Under the impact of two world wars, the great depression of the thirties, and the challenge to our national heritage, it has assumed a national as well as a local character, and is today in full stride.² Through the De-

partment of the Interior, and the Advisory Board of the National Park Service, the federal government has been cooperating with state, municipal, and private efforts in the preservation and restoration of historic shrines.

Until the present decade official Philadelphia, although solicitous in the care of Independence Hall, remained unresponsive. The survey by the Philadelphia Chapter of the Institute of American Architects showing the extraordinary number of fine historic buildings still standing in Old Philadelphia went almost unnoticed. Only after the repeated and devoted efforts of individual citizens, civic and patriotic organizations has Philadelphia become really conscious not only of its obligations, but of its opportunities. Today we have in addition to a number of historic projects in the program of the City Planning Commission,³ two major developments of an

American Institute of Architects and the Library of Congress, and on a somewhat more popular and different level, by certain activities of the W.P.A. Attention was attracted to its national, as well as its local significance. Thousands of communities became somehow conscious of their local history and its relation to the history of the country as a whole. With World War II and the bombing of cities abroad, its universal importance also became evident. Impressed with this and the richness of our cultural heritage, President Roosevelt set up state commissions for the conservation of cultural resources. Through their efforts, state and local historical societies, the schools, and many private organizations were enlisted to coordinate their efforts, and an amazing awareness of the nation's cultural resources was awakened. For most of the period the writer served as Director of the Pennsylvania Commission for the Conservation of Cultural Resources, which had its headquarters in our Hall, the Society generously adding office space and secretarial assistance as well as a modest financial grant. At the close of the war, interest had become so broad that it was decided to take advantage of the momentum and carry on. Under the leadership of State Historian, Dr. S. K. Stevens, and others, steps were taken to organize the state and local history organizations on a national basis, our Society making a substantial grant toward that end for a two-year period. The results have already exceeded the most sanguine expectations. The membership throughout the country has increased by leaps and bounds, while a new magazine, *American Heritage*, has been established to coordinate the interests of the many state and local history publications. Here in Philadelphia sentiment was thoroughly aroused by the conditions surrounding Independence Square, the nation's most historic area. The Independence Hall Association was organized, and largely through its efforts, ably directed by Judge Edwin O. Lewis, Independence Square and its buildings, including Philosophical Hall, were officially declared a national shrine. In 1951 the Square and its buildings, except Philosophical Hall, were transferred by the city to the custody and maintenance of the Federal Government.

³ See the *Report of the Mayor to the Citizens of Philadelphia for 1948*.

¹ This history of Philosophical Hall is a revision and slight expansion of "The Story of 'Philosophical Hall'" delivered as the Franklin Medal Lecture on November 4, 1949, upon the reoccupation of its Hall after its reconstruction by the Society. The name did not originate with the erection of the building which has been the home of the Society for more than 160 years. It appeared earlier in the advertisements of the fortnightly meetings, especially in the 1770's in connection with the Christ Church School on Second Street. Even in later years it was sometimes used to designate the particular quarters in the Hall reserved by the Society. In general, however, the building on Independence Square erected by the American Philosophical Society held in Philadelphia for Promoting Useful Knowledge became known as "Philosophical Hall," and it is in this sense that it is used here.

² Interest in historic buildings and sites which had long been rather sporadic and without direction in this country was greatly stimulated during the depression of the thirties by the superb work of the National Park Service in cooperation with the



FIG. 1. Philosophical Hall restored to its original design in 1949.

historic character, involving both conservation and restoration, one financed by the State, the other by the federal government. The story of these two projected improvements, *malls* as they are called, has been so widely discussed in the public press that comment here is unnecessary. Suffice it to say that the Independence National Historic Park, with which Philosophical Hall is so closely integrated, awaits only the acquisition of a few more properties in the area to attain the two-thirds quota specified by the Act before it can be officially proclaimed. The national government has appropriated the money, the President has appointed an advisory commission, and a staff of specialists from the National Park Service has set up its offices here in Old Philadelphia to direct the work.⁴

It is therefore, a matter of particular satisfaction to our Society that an important initial step in the process took place under its auspices when the Independence Hall Association was organized here in Philosophical Hall, and that the Society has sponsored the formation of the nationwide State and Local History Association. As the plans for the Independence National Historical Park began to mature, the Society promptly gave consideration to putting its own house in order. The ungainly third story added to the Hall in 1890 not only

destroyed its original character architecturally, but put it out of harmony with the other buildings of the Independence Hall group. The desirability of restoring Philosophical Hall to its eighteenth century appearance, by removing the incongruous superstructure, had been discussed before, but without results. In 1946 the Society voted to do this, and at the same time modernize and fireproof the Hall. This has now been done with eminent success. Philosophical Hall has been restored to its original exterior design, and the interior remodeled in accord with the best colonial tradition by our architect, Mr. Sydney Martin, working in close cooperation with the officers of the Society. The cost has mounted to well over \$200,000, or about five times the amount it took to erect the third story superstructure fifty-nine years ago. Nevertheless, it has met with unanimous approval. Philosophical Hall not only is again in perfect harmony architecturally with the other fine old colonial buildings of our great historic Square, but its own Quaker-like simplicity and loveliness has been recaptured—an historic shrine in perfect keeping with the scholarly and scientific purposes of the Society (fig. 1).

II

BEGINNINGS OF THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The American Philosophical Society is the oldest learned and scientific society in America. Like the

⁴ For a recent summary of these developments, see: Peterson, Charles E., Philadelphia's new national park, *Report Fairmount Park Art Association* 80: 17-37, 1952.

Pennsylvania Hospital, the University of Pennsylvania, and many other institutions of Philadelphia, it was started by Benjamin Franklin. In 1743, he issued "A PROPOSAL for PROMOTING USEFUL KNOWLEDGE among the BRITISH PLANTATIONS in AMERICA."

In response to the appeal, a small group of scientifically minded men organized the American Philosophical Society, closely modeled on the Royal Society of London. The organization was not very active in the years immediately following, Franklin confessing sadly that "the members of our Society here, are very idle gentlemen, they will take no pains." Interest languished, and the records are sparse until 1768. In that year, however, quite unexpected activity developed. Several of the original members, joined by six others, elected eighteen more, mostly of the Proprietary party. They met in the State House, and John Penn, the Lt. Governor, was invited to become the Society's patron.

Meanwhile, another group, calling itself "The American Society, held at Philadelphia for promoting useful knowledge," and claiming descent from Franklin's Junto, also became active, and proposed a merger. Acting on the suggestion, the American Philosophical Society elected all the members of the American Society. This the latter indignantly rejected as an attempt at predatory absorption. Out of the rivalry came a plan of union adopted on December 20, 1768, and the consolidation of the two societies in 1769 under the name of "The American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for promoting useful knowledge." In recognition of Franklin's "Proposal" the year 1743 has been adopted by the Society as the date of its origin, though for a short period from 1914 to 1948, the earlier date of Franklin's Junto (1727), was accepted in accord with the majority report of a special committee on the date of the founding of the Society.⁵

FIRST STEPS TOWARD A PERMANENT HOME

For twenty years after the union in 1769 the new Society, like its parents, did not have a home of its own. Even after its incorporation under the Charter of March 15, 1780, and graduation from Pewter Platter Alley, it met here and there—in Carpenters' Hall, at the College and later at Christ Church School on Second Street. On the other hand, the question of a permanent home appears to have been a matter of especial concern to the members from the very beginning. On May 20, 1769, less than five months after the merger, the Society ordered "that application be made to the Assembly for a lot of ground in the state house square, whereon to build a house to accommodate the Society." A committee was appointed "to draw up & present to the Assembly the petition for that purpose."⁶

⁵ Cf. Conklin, Edwin G., Brief history of the Society, *Yr. Bk. Amer. Philos. Society* for 1951: 7-34, 1952, for a more detailed account of the early history, and of its later development.

⁶ Amer. Philos. Soc. Archives. Minutes of the American Philosophical Society . . . 20 May, 1769. At the same meeting

Although the Committee was later continued, and the matter came up now and then during the next decade, it was not again vigorously advocated till 1783. An entry in the Minutes for July 19 of that year reads:

It having been long in Contemplation of this Society to purchase a Lot in some convenient Part of the City for the Purpose of erecting a Hall for the reception of the Books, & natural Curiosities belonging to the Corporation, & as a Place of Meeting for the Members; & it being now mentioned that a convenient Lot may be purchased on reasonable Terms in Fifth Street near Arch Street. . . .

On Motion, it was resolved that a Committee be appointed to confer with the Proprietors of the said Lot respecting the Purchase, & to know from them the lowest Price at which it may be had for ready money.

The Committee was appointed and in February, 1784, it recommended

that Measures be immediately taken for erecting a suitable Building for the accommodation of the Society; and [the committee] are of Opinion that if a Lot of Ground was purchased for the Purpose, it would not be difficult to raise by Subscription a Sum sufficient for completing a convenient Building—at least they think it ought to be vigorously attempted without delay. . . . and that as soon as £1000 shall be subscribed a Committee be appointed to plan a suitable Edfice to be laid before the Society for Approbation. . . .⁷

Accordingly, when the lot on Fifth Street near Arch belonging to Francis Hopkinson was purchased, Mr. Samuel Vaughan, Mr. Rittenhouse, and Mr. Hopkinson were elected "a Committee to consider of the most eligible means of providing the Society with a suitable Building."⁸ Before anything was done, however, a radical change of attitude toward the lot on Fifth Street near Arch took place. A proposal to join with the Library Company in an appeal to the Assembly for two lots in State House Yard met with approval. At the meeting of March 19, the Committee reported that

they had met with a Committee of the Directors of the Library Company of Philadelphia and had in conjunction with them drawn up and presented to the General Assembly a joint Petition for two Lots of Ground on the East and West Sides of the State-House Square for the Purpose of erecting two suitable Buildings. . . .⁹

A copy of the joint petition was thereupon read, and a resolution passed that "this Society highly approve of the conduct of their Committee." Unfortunately, differences arose between the two organizations over which should get the lot on Fifth Street, Sixth Street being "too far west!" On December 17, Samuel Vaughan, who had been trying to adjust the difficulties, "reported that the Library Company having declined to join in the petition to the Assembly upon the terms proposed by

the report on the preparations for the observations of the Transit of Venus was made.

⁷ *Ibid.*, February 6, 1784.

⁸ *Ibid.*, March 5, 1784.

⁹ *Ibid.*, March 19, 1784. The joint petition for two lots 40' x 80' on State House Yard was dated March 12th.

this society, the Committee had, agreeably to the directions of the society, presented a petition in the name of the society alone."¹⁰

THE LOT ON INDEPENDENCE SQUARE

To the surprise of some, the Assembly, after referring the question to its Committee on Ways and Means before adjournment, took the matter up promptly when it reconvened, and by the Act of March 28, 1785, gave to the Society the lot of ground on which Philosophical Hall now stands with the right to erect a building. Section 2 of the Act reads:

Be it enacted and it is hereby enacted by the Representatives of the Freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and by the Authority of the same, That a certain Lot or piece of ground being part of the State House Square situated on the West side of Fifth Street and beginning ninety six feet Southward from Chestnut Street and thence extending along Fifth Street aforesaid seventy feet South towards Walnut Street thence Westwardly on the State House square fifty feet, thence Northward in a line parallel to Fifth Street seventy feet and thence Eastward fifty feet to the place of Beginning, shall and hereby is given and granted to and vested in the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia for promoting useful knowledge, to have and to hold the said Lot of Ground to the said American Philosophical Society and their Successors for ever; for the purpose of erecting thereon a Hall, Library and such other buildings or apartments as the said Society may think necessary for their proper accommodation.¹¹

The favorable action of the Assembly is quite remarkable when viewed in the light of its earlier resolutions on February 29, 1735-36, and again on February 17, 1762:

That no part of the said ground lying to the southward of State House as it is now built be converted into or made use of for erecting any sort of buildings thereupon, but that the said ground shall be enclosed and remain a public open green and walks forever.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND BUILDING

There were, therefore, special reasons for the somewhat precipitous rush to begin excavating for the cellar and the foundations, even though the campaign for funds had hardly started. A special meeting was called for April 1, 1785, at which it was agreed, that "a Subscription be opened immediately," and "that Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Magaw be a Committee For the Purpose of soliciting and procuring Subscriptions." The form of subscription as drawn was submitted to the Society on April 15 and "after receiving a few alterations, adopted." The text¹² as recorded in the minutes, and used with slight changes in the campaign reads:

In as much as useful Knowledge is always an object of first consideration amongst an enlightened and free People; and as the American Philosophical Society was instituted

for the express purpose of cultivating such branches thereof, as have an immediate tendency to advance the Agriculture, Manufactures, and Commerce of this country; as well as to pursue more deep and refined disquisitions in the field of nature;—

—And whereas their proceedings and success have been, heretofore, and still are, greatly impeded, thro' want of a suitable place to meet in, and proper Repositories for the Books, Apparatus, and various Communications, Donations, etc.—to remedy which, the General Assembly of this Commonwealth have, by a special Act, granted and confirmed to the said Society, and their Successors, a very convenient Lot of Ground, being part of the Statehouse Square, on the East side;—Therefore, We the Subscribers, desirous, with all practicable expedition to enable a Committee which is appointed for the purpose, to construct a neat, sufficient Building on the ground aforesaid, do, hereby, promise to pay, within three months after the Date hereof, into the hands of the Treasurer of the American Philosophical Society, or to any person authorized by them to receive the same, the Sums annexed to the Subscription of our respective Names —————

Dated at Philadelphia, this Day of 1785.

A. B.
C. D. &c. —————

At the meeting of April 1 it was also voted

that Edward Shippen, Samuel Powel, Francis Hopkinson, and Samuel Vaughan, Esquires, be a Committee to procure Stone, and other necessary Materials for laying the Foundatn. of the Building aforesaid.

In accordance with the practice of the times, the committee assumed direction, not only of drafting the plans, but of procuring supplies and looking after the construction. Like many others—professionals and amateurs—men of character, working from books by Gibbs, Langley, and others based largely on Sir Christopher Wren, gave us an American renaissance which, to quote Dr. Wertenbaker, "flowered from New England to Georgia and gave to Philadelphia the most remarkable group of civic buildings in colonial America, the most beautiful church structure and scores of handsome residences."¹³

What has just been said, explains the fact that no architect's plans for the Hall have been found, though the dimensions of the rooms, cellars and vaults appear in several places, as for example in the following entry for the Minutes of June 17, 1785:

The Plan of a Building for the use of the American Philosophical Society, to be erected on the Lot granted by the General Assembly, was delivered in by Mr. Vaughan, for the Society's consideration,—and approved of.

Dimensions of the Plan ———

Passage ———	12 Feet by 47
Hall, or largest Room	
on the South side,	27 d° by 47
Room on the N.E. side	27 by 23
Room on the N.W. side	27 by 23
Height of the 1 st Floor,	14 Feet
Second floor,	10 d°
—— Cellars to be 7 Feet high.	
—— Vaults, under them, of equal height	

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, December 17, 1784.

¹¹ Statutes at large of Pennsylvania MS. Act of March 28, 1785, Law Book 2: 414.

¹² *Amer. Philos. Soc. Minutes*, April 15, 1785.

¹³ Wertenbaker, Thomas J., *The golden age of colonial culture*, 74, N. Y., N. Y. Univ. Press, 1942.

His Excellency Benjamin Franklin, Esq.	£. s. d.
	100 0 0
Samuel Vaughan, Esq.	50
William Hamilton, Esq.	25
John Penn, junior, Esq.	25
Robert Morris, Esq. being his pay as Member of Assembly for city of Philadelphia.	25 5 0
William Bingham, Esq.	20
Charles Tompson, Esq.	15
Thomas Hutchins, Esq. Geographer General,	10 10 0
Mr. John Vaughan	10
Mr. George Fox	10
Dr. John Morgan	7 10 0
John Rees, Esq.	5
Henry Hill, Esq.	5
Charles Biddle, Esq.	5
Mr. Robert Patterson	5
Samuel Heister, Esq.	5
Mr. Levi Hollingsworth	5
David Rittenhouse, Esq.	5
Mr. A. Ellicott, of Baltimore,	5
Matthew Clarkson, Esq.	5
Mr. Benjamin Wyncoop	5
Mr. John Dunlap	5
Rev. Dr. John Ewing	5
Dr. William White	5
Dr. Samuel Magaw	5
Dr. Henry Helmuth	5
Mr. Robert Blackwell	5
Mr. James Davison	3
Hon. Thomas M'Kean	5
William Augustus Atlee	5
George Bryan	5
Jacob Ruff	5
Francis Hopkinson	5
Samuel Miles	5
Edward Shippen, Esq.	5
Plunket Fleeson, Esq.	5
Wm. Bradford, Esq. Attorney General	5
John Lukins, Esquire.	5
John B. Smith, Esq.	5
James Wison, Esq.	5
Jared Ingersol, Esq.	5
William Rawle, Esq.	5
Robert Milligan, Esq.	5
Edward, Tilghman, Esq.	5
John F. Miffin, Esq.	5
Joseph B. M'Kean, Esq.	5
Benjamin Chew, Esq.	5
Peter Ste. du Ponceau, Esq.	5
William Jackson, Esq.	5
Dr. John Jones	5
Gerardus Clarkson	5
George Glentworth	5
William Shippen	5
Adam Kuhn	5
Benjamin Rush	5
Robert Harris	5
John Carson	5
James Hutchinson	5

Thomas Parke	5
Barnabus Binney	5
John Foulke	5
Samuel P. Griffiths	5
Mr. Samuel Vaughan, junior,	5
Mr. Mark Workman	3
Sharp Delany, Esq.	5
Mr. Thomas Bradford	5
John Caldwell, Esq.	5
Mr. Thomas Lee	5
Edward Burd, Esq.	5
Mr. John Sellers	3
Mr. Charles W. Peale	5
Mr. Charles Brown	5
John Bayard, Esq.	5
George Clymer, Esq.	5
Mr. Thomas Clifford	5
Tench Cox, Esq.	5
Mr. Samuel Pleasant	5
Jonathan Hoge, Esq.	5
Mr. John Swanwick	5
A Well-wisher	5
Mr. James Pemberton	5
Mr. John Hiltzheimer	5
Hon. Thomas Miffin, Esq.	5
Isaac Gray, Esq.	5
Mr. James Bringham	5
Jonathan D. Serjeant, Esq.	5
Alexander Wilcocks, Esq.	5
Mr. James Peason	5
Charles Moore, Esq.	5

N. B. For the satisfaction of the public, a complete list of the subscriptions towards carrying on this useful undertaking, with a particular account of the expenditures in completing the same, will be laid before them as soon as practicable.

FIG. 2. A list of early subscribers for the erection of Philosophical Hall. *Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser*, November 8, 1786.

Since the campaign for subscriptions proved somewhat disappointing, the Committee was given the option "to begin this Work immediately; or to defer it Some time longer;—as they may judge most expedient." Furthermore, as so often happens, plans had to be altered to conform to expediency and available funds. At the meeting of June 16, 1786, the question of the underground vaults was discussed, and it was

Resolved, as the building of Vaults, and Cellars thereon, would be very expensive, that Cellars only may be built; and to be raised two feet in the clear, above the State-house Garden, in order to have Windows to give Light, and a thorough Air thro' the Cellar: —

The same meeting further ordered

that as the intended Hall will for the most part, be used after Sunset; that it may be built on the North side; and that the two Rooms may be built on the South Side, for the advantage of having more Light and air.

The Minutes of the meetings of the late summer and autumn of 1786 reveal clearly that matters were not progressing to the satisfaction of some. On October 20 the Committee on the Building reporting itself not "able to concur," was discharged, and Samuel Vaughan, Thomas Clifford, and Dr. Thomas Parke were empow-

* The Committee who have at present the superintendence of this business are Samuel Vaughan, Esq. Mr. Thomas Clifford, and Dr. Thomas Parke.

ered to "carry on the said building." To add to the general embarrassment, Mr. Hopkinson begged "leave to resign his Office of Treasurer," and asked that a committee be "appointed to examine his accounts." Fortunately, he was persuaded to reconsider, which he did, the Society ordering that "the committee for carrying on the Society's building in the State-house-square be appointed to collect the money subscribed or which may be subscribed for that purpose and pay the same into the hands of the Treasurer."¹⁴

Strong appeals were again made for additional subscriptions as is shown in the introductory paragraph of a list of early subscribers printed in the November 8, 1786, issue of the *Pennsylvania Journal and Weekly Advertiser*:

TO THE PUBLIC.

The Legislature having granted to the American Philosophical Society a lot of ground in the State House square (on which to erect a convenient building for the accommodation of the Society at their stated meetings, and for the reception of the apparatus, library and other valuable donations of which they are now, or may hereafter be possessed) the Committee appointed by the Society to carry on this building have, by the generous subscriptions of a few citizens, been enabled to make some progress in this business; which is however necessarily deferred till next spring, when they are determined to complete the same, if possible; as the Society will be thereby enabled more effectually to prosecute the ends of their institution, namely, the promoting of Useful Knowledge, especially as it respects the Agriculture, Manufactures, and Natural History of North America.

Such Gentlemen as have not yet had an opportunity of subscribing, will be particularly waited upon by the Committee, when it is hoped they will add their names to the list of those who have already subscribed to this laudable undertaking, viz.

Even a casual study of the list of subscribers reveals the distinguished character of the group interested in the Society and its permanent home. Franklin's subscription of £100 is followed by that of Samuel Vaughan, a distinguished Jamaica planter who, although only a temporary resident of Philadelphia, did so much to stimulate civic interest in Independence Square. William Hamilton, John Penn, Jr., Robert Morris, William Bingham, Charles Thomson, Thomas Hutchins, and others are all well-known to students of Old Philadelphia, and it is quite obvious that the undertaking aroused a real community interest among the city's intellectual and scientifically minded citizens (fig. 2).

NEAR FAILURE

Matters didn't improve greatly during the winter and spring of 1787, and by midsummer of 1787, while the Constitutional Convention was meeting in Independence Hall, the Society was unable to meet its bills. In July a committee was appointed "to make inquiry concerning some proposals of the *Library Company*, relative to the Society's Lot, & the intended Hall, in the State-house

Yard." A month later on August 17, the Committee reported.

That they have had a Conference with the Board of Directors of the Library Company; and proposed to them, that the Company should either jointly finish & occupy the Building, on terms of equality and mutual convenience: or that the Company should take the Lot & Building altogether, and pay on demand a Sum equal to what hath been expended on the preparing and constructing of the Cellars; and also the value of the privilege of the Ground — The latter proposition seemed to meet the inclinations of the Directors: but they desired meanwhile to deliberate a little farther; and to have the full ideas of their Constituents on the subject. It is probable they may be authorized to agree to the Proposal.

Signed,

Sam. Magaw
Fra. Hopkinson
Jonathan Hoge
Thos. Ruston

Upon receiving the foregoing Report, Ordered, That the Company be informed, that the Society are not yet able to exhibit an exact account of the expence of the Cellars; neither are they yet prepared to come to any definitive agreement on the subject of the late Conference.

As the days passed, the Society's financial difficulties grew steadily worse till some of the members were ready to sell the property to the Library Company. At a stated meeting on September 7, 1787, it was moved

That a Committee be appointed to treat with the Directors of the Library Company concerning the disposing of the Society's Lot & Cellars; & that they be empowered to close the bargain of Transfer to said Directors, or Company, on the Terms already suggested to them.

But an amendment was moved and carried that the "matter be postponed" and "made the special Order of the Evening, on Friday the 14th Instant." The situation was obviously extremely critical.

FRANKLIN TO THE RESCUE

Fortunately Franklin had returned home in the summer of 1785. The records of the special meeting on Friday, September 14, if held, cannot be found. On the other hand, the moot question was made the special order of meeting for the evening of September 18. Franklin presided. Characteristically, however, he gave precedence to a scientific communication from the Professor of Astronomy at Glasgow on "the construction of Mr. Hirschel's [*sic*] forty Feet Telescope," and a letter from New Jersey on plaster chimneys with "mortar mixed with Salt." Only then did he bring up the question of the Hall. The action of the meeting on it is recorded in the following minute:

Sept.ber 18, 1787.

At the House of His Excellency the President.

The Phil. Society met, pursuant to special Appointment. . . . Mr. Vaughan produced his account of the Subscriptions received towards the Society's Building; and of the Expenditures already made.—

On considering the Motion made by Dr. Hutchinson, at the meeting of the 7th of this inst. viz. "That a Committee

¹⁴ Minutes, November 17, 1786.

be appointed to treat with the Directors of the Library Company concerning the disposing of the Society's Lot, &c"—which motion by postponement, was set over to the present evening;—being now brought forward, and argued upon; it was determined in the negative——

It was then

Resolved, That the said Committee are immediately to proceed; and with all convenient dispatch to have the Walls carried up, & covered in ——

The Society adjourned; to hold their next stated meeting, at the President's House, agreeably to his Invitation.

The defeatists were defeated! But as yet there was no formal assurance that the necessary funds were forthcoming. On the other hand, the confident tone of the resolution suggests that provisions had been made informally, at least. There is evidence of another meeting during October, but we can only surmise what occurred. The Minutes are silent. Unfortunately Franklin's correspondence and memoirs do not help us either. His letters for these years, like his great speech before the Constitutional Convention on September 17, 1787, deal with larger issues, and the account of the addition to his own house for his sister, Jane Mecom, a year earlier, was written in direct response to her inquiries. While the reference there to the "high cost of labor" may have been partly inspired by the difficulties over Philosophical Hall, the further remark that "building is an Amusement" as one grows older would hardly apply to his relations with the building of the Society's hall. The silence of the memoirs is, of course, explained by the fact that they do not go beyond the late fifties, else we might have had the same spirited account of these critical days in the story of Philosophical Hall, as those on other enterprises he either started, or rescued from failure. The Society's Minutes of the meeting for November 2, 1787, tell the story in part. The pertinent paragraphs read:

Whereas the President of this Society, his Excellency Benjn. Franklin, Esq; to enable this Body to complete the Building begun for their use, in the State-House Square, and which was lately at a stand, for want of sufficient Funds to prosecute the intentions of the Society;—has subscribed a second Hundred pounds in addition to his former Donation; and has also offered a Loan of what money may be requisite to raise & cover the Building, upon legal Interest; it is therefore,

RESOLVED,

That the Thanks of the Society be returned to his Excellency Benjn. Franklin, Esq; President of this Society, for his generous additional contribution. . . .

A committee was appointed to wait on the President in order to confer with him on the form of the security to be offered. This was promptly done, and upon the report of the interview, it was

RESOLVED

That the Society give to his Excellency Benjn. Franklin, esq; a Bond for the money he may advance for carrying on, and covering their Building in the State-house Square—not exceeding Five hundred Pounds; . . .

The Bond was duly executed and later paid in full to the heirs of Franklin's estate.

TRIBUTE TO SAMUEL VAUGHAN ¹⁵

Meanwhile, the campaign for subscriptions was vigorously and successfully resumed under the direction of Samuel Vaughan, and in recognition of his services it was resolved at the meeting on December 21,

That the Society entertain a very high sense of the services rendered them by Samuel Vaughan Esq;—and that the Thanks of this Body be presented to that Gentleman, for his disinterested and successful attention to their Interests.

His Excellency the President did, accordingly, present the Society's thanks to Mr. Vaughan (fig. 3).

This formal tribute to Samuel Vaughan recalls his extraordinary service to the Society. His subscriptions and those of his friends toward the building of Philosophical Hall were large, quite apart from the time and continued attention he gave to the details of its construction. With Rittenhouse and Francis Hopkinson he helped to initiate the plan and continued throughout its principal promoter.

The tradition that Franklin suggested building the Hall cannot be sustained. On the contrary, the evidence clearly points to Vaughan, Hopkinson, and others. On March 8, 1784, Vaughan wrote to Franklin of the plan for two lots on State House Square, one for the Society, the other for the Library Company of Philadelphia:

¹⁵ Samuel Vaughan of London, a successful Jamaica trader, came to America with part of his family in 1783. A friend of Franklin and fellow-member of Franklin's London Coffee House "Club of Honest Whigs," he received a cordial welcome in Philadelphia. Being a man of broad interests, he soon threw himself with much enthusiasm into the intellectual and social life of the city (*cp.* "The Philadelphia Sojourn of Samuel Vaughan" by Sarah P. Stetson in the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, Oct. 1949). In January of 1784 he was elected to the Philosophical Society, and for four years he gave much of his time and energy to its affairs. In a letter to Richard Price of August 2, 1786, Dr. Rush wrote: "He has been the principal cause of the resurrection of our Philosophical Society. He has even done more, he has laid the foundation of a philosophical hall which will preserve his name and the name of his family among us for many, many years to come." *Mass. Hist. Soc. Proc.* 2nd ser. 17: 349, 1903. While this is somewhat overdrawn, it is, as we have seen, correct to attribute the progress of the building of the Hall in large measure to his hard work and loyalty. Following his return from Jamaica where he had gone to look after his business interests, he left Philadelphia permanently for London in 1790. His bachelor son John, however, continued in Philadelphia and was for many years a secretary and the distinguished librarian of the Society. An older son, Benjamin, was a devoted friend of Franklin's, the first to publish his collected works in English (1779) and, as Lord Shelburne's personal representative, was intimately associated with Franklin in the important peace negotiations in Passy. Their correspondence covers a wide range of subjects, and it is, therefore, very fitting that the Vaughan Family Papers have now been added to the manuscript collections of our Library.

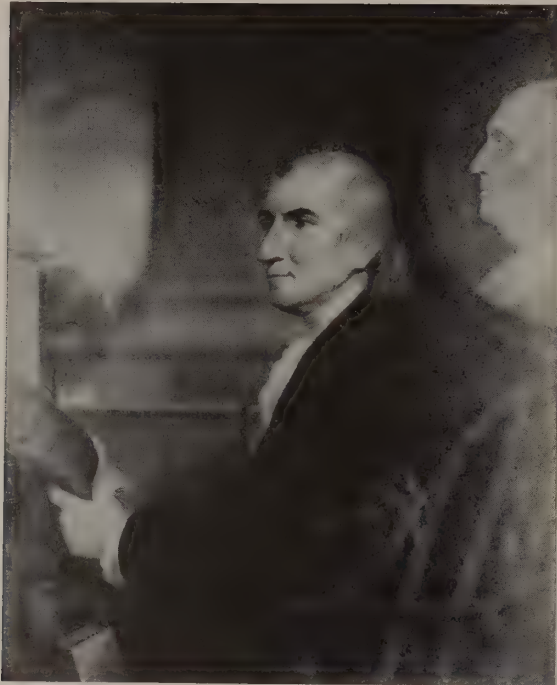


FIG. 3. Samuel Vaughan (1720-1802) by Robert Edge Pine. This portrait has had a curious history in that it was for years held to be a portrait of Francis Hopkinson by Charles Willson Peale. Some years ago Charles Henry Hart proved conclusively that it was the portrait of Samuel Vaughan by Robert Edge Pine, willed to the Society by his son, John Vaughan. This is in thorough accord with the accessories in the painting—the bust of Franklin, the glimpse of Independence Square with a suggestion of the elms Vaughan suggested in connection with its landscaping, Philosophical Hall which he did so much to build, and the titles of the volumes in the lower left-hand corner of the picture.

... They wish to make an application to the Legislature for a grant of Ground on the S.E. & S.W. corners of the Statehouse yard for the erecting of two buildings one for the library, another for the Society, which are meant to be sufficiently ornamental not to interfere materially with the views of making a publick walk—Committees from the two bodies meet tomorrow to Confer on the proper mode of application—Many advantages will result from this arrangement. if it meets with Success, some of them will necessarily Strike you—The Society felt the necessity of a resting place so strongly that they a few meetings ago purchased a large lot of M. Hopkinson near the observatory, upon which they propose building if the assembly should reject the petition & we flatter ourselves Subscriptions will not be wanting to enable them to do it; should they succeed which is not improbable, it may either be resold or be converted into a Botanical Garden.

In a short letter of May 3, wrongly dated 1783 instead of 1784, he repeats the statement about the two lots and suggests that, if Franklin shares his views, he communicate his sentiments which would carry great weight.¹⁶ On the same day Francis Hopkinson wrote

¹⁶ *Cp.* Amer. Philos. Soc. Franklin MSS. 31: 106 and 28: 75. The latter is dated May 3, 1783, which is obviously in error, since Vaughan had not yet arrived in Philadelphia, and the

to Thomas Jefferson, concluding his letter as follows:

I have scarce left Room to tell you that there is a Design on foot to erect two elegant Buildings on the State house Square, one for the philosophical Society the other for the City Library, to which is to be united the Loganian Library. I yesterday drew up the Petition to the House to grant us the Ground necessary for these Purposes.¹⁷

But if Franklin didn't initiate the project for a lot and "House," his staunch support after his return from France was obviously a determining factor in making possible its successful realization.

BUILDING COVERED. FIRST MEETING IN THE HALL,
NOVEMBER 20, 1789

Franklin's loan of £500, his second subscription of £100, and a renewal drive to collect others even at the point of the law for those already pledged, at last furnished the funds "requisite to raise and cover the Building." During the next two years Franklin himself took a very active part in the affairs of the Society, presiding at most of its meetings. Meanwhile, work on completing the Hall proceeded steadily. At the stated meeting on August 21, 1789, at which Franklin was not present, it was resolved

That the future meetings of the Society shall be in the Philosophical Hall; unless on occasions, when the President's health may allow him to be present: then, they shall be held in his house. Respecting this circumstance, the Secretary who advertises, is directed to make due inquiry some days before the times of meeting.

In editing the Minutes Peter Lesley inserted "[not]" after the word "may" in the third line, erroneously changing the meaning as appears below in the letter of September 17 addressed to Franklin by the secretary, R. Patterson.

There are no Minutes for the two dates on which the Society would normally have met after August 21. The next recorded meeting was September 18. On the day preceding, the Secretary, acting in accordance with the instructions of April 21, wrote to Franklin as follows:

Sir

The Philosophical Society, at their last meeting, directed that one of their Secretaries should wait upon you, previous to their next meeting to know whether it was probable that your state of health would permit you to attend, and that the meeting should be held at your house for that purpose.

If this should not be the case, their Hall in fifth street being now in some degree prepared for their reception, they proposed to hold their meeting there, and directed me to advertise accordingly.

subject was not considered or acted upon by the Society until 1784.

¹⁷ Francis Hopkinson to Jefferson, 12 Mch. 1784 (Lib. Congr., Jeff. Pap. 10: 1647). I cite the original because I am indebted to Mr. Lyman H. Butterfield for drawing my attention to this paragraph, which for some reason is deleted in the letter as published in Hastings' *Francis Hopkinson*.

Your pleasure on this point, signified by the bearer, will much oblige —

Sir

Your obedient
humble Servant
R. Patterson
Sepr. 17

Honble Dr. Benjamin Franklin¹⁸

That Franklin's reply was favorable is attested by the advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Packet* of the meeting on September 18 to be held at Franklin's house. Other meetings on October 2, 16, and November 5, were also held there as advertised. On the thirteenth the officers and councilors met in the Hall, and, according to the Minutes, the Society itself met there on November 21, the editor of the printed Minutes adding "[First regular meeting of the Society in the New Building.]" If he had checked the date against the advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Packet*, he would have found the following in the issue of November 20:

A stated meeting of the American Philosophical Society will be held at their hall This Evening at six o'clock.¹⁹

Moreover, Friday, and not Saturday, was the day of the week on which the Society customarily met. It can therefore be accepted that the first regular meeting of the Society in its own Hall occurred on Friday, November 20, 1789.²⁰

The exact day when the Society first met in Philosophical Hall is not of great significance. The important fact is that after four years Philosophical Hall was at last ready for occupancy. Moreover, in view of the discouraging efforts to build a suitable home and provide suitable quarters for its meetings and library, it seems a little surprising that so little notice was taken of its completion. Apart from the laconic heading "Philosophical Hall, November 21, 1789" for the Minutes of the first meeting, there is no intimation of any special occasion. There was no celebration; no speeches were made; and no resolutions adopted. The fact that the interior of the Hall was still unfinished, and more particularly, respect and love for the President, now confined to his home by his last illness, doubtless ac-

¹⁸ Amer. Philos. Soc. Franklin MSS. 36: 175.

¹⁹ My attention was called to this discrepancy by Mrs. Hess to whom, and Mrs. Duncan, I am indebted for other valuable assistance.

²⁰ While the manuscript Minutes are the basic source for the story of the Hall and of the Society in general, even they must be used with care. The successive recording secretaries were by no means all adapted to the task. Inclination and circumstances were allowed to interfere with the prompt recording of the proceedings, and since the Minutes were not, as at a later period, read and approved at subsequent meetings, errors and omissions do occur. Hence, when important questions are involved they should be checked against other sources, like the reports of Committees and other archival materials of the Society, the records of the Assembly and of City Councils, and, for the sake of richness and human interest, the contemporary newspapers, diaries, memoirs, and correspondence of members and others.

count for this quiet and unheralded occupation of Philosophical Hall by the Society. It was left to their successors one hundred years later to commemorate the event. The ceremonies and addresses attended by many distinguished guests on that occasion—November 21, 1889—being in marked contrast to the first meeting of the Society in its Hall. On the other hand, despite the triumphant character of the later celebration, a note of sorrow pervaded the proceedings. The threat of being dispossessed by the authority of the Public Building Commission appointed by the State, was then still so serious that the conclusion of President Fraley's eloquent address quoted below took on somewhat the character of a swan song. But the crisis in the life of Philosophical Hall at the end of the first century of its existence was, after all, only one in a succession of very critical situations in its history.

III

CRISES IN THE STORY OF THE HALL

The story of Philosophical Hall since 1789, like that of the years preceding, is marked by repeated periods of unrest and uncertainty. Sometimes this was caused by pressure from without; at others by conditions within the Society itself. On several occasions the Hall narrowly escaped passing into other hands; at other times, like its companion, the fine building of the Philadelphia Library Company across the street, it was actually in danger of demolition. During the first half-century of its existence, however, no major crisis occurred. In 1816 the City bought Independence Square from the State for \$70,000 and so became the custodian of its buildings and grounds, except Philosophical Hall. Nevertheless, it generously gave to the Society by a sort of gentleman's agreement the use of the small triangular area on the south side of the Hall as a service entrance.

The first in the series of agitations to sell the Hall, and leave Independence Square, developed in the late thirties and early forties. A committee on a new site and building was appointed in 1834. Negotiations with the City, which was seeking accommodations for its rapidly expanding administrative and judicial departments, resulted in the ordinance of 1841 authorizing the purchase of the Hall by the municipality. The financial depression of 1838–1842, and disagreement over the price, led to the withdrawal of the offer. Unfortunately, the Society, in anticipation of a satisfactory conclusion to the negotiations, had already bought the Chinese Museum building on Ninth Street, even mortgaging its Library and cabinets for the purpose. Literally left "holding the bag," the Society's very existence was threatened, the Sheriff instituting foreclosure proceedings on behalf of the creditors. Once again, however, the loyalty of the members came to the rescue. The obligations were met, the debts paid, and the Hall and Library saved.

A systematic study of the Minutes from this standpoint is greatly needed and the plans for the work are being developed.

In the meantime, plans to join with the Athenaeum to erect a new building on another site were made. Toward this end, an Act of Assembly was obtained "for relief of the American Philosophical Society." The Act authorized the sale of the Society's building on Independence Square, for "the accommodation of Courts of Justice and officers connected therewith, or for public uses of the City and County of Philadelphia," nothing in the Act of Assembly granting the lot to the Society to the contrary notwithstanding. But the proposals to affiliate with the Athenaeum, and the sale of the Hall to the city again came to nought with the abandonment by the municipality of its plans. Instead, certain rooms were put at the disposal of the Mayor.

THE HALL SOLD TO THE UNITED STATES

In the fifties, the United States Government sought and obtained accommodations in the Hall for the use of the Federal Courts of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania. In a letter of May 18, 1854, addressed to Charles B. Trego, the Treasurer of the Society, United States Marshall F. B. Wynkoop, wrote:

Dear Sir:

I desire to rent a portion of the building now occupied by your association for the purpose of accommodating the wants of the United States Courts.

That portion of the building which we will require is the ground and 2nd floor, now occupied as offices and used by the Mayor of the city as his reception room. . . .²¹

Two years later in 1856, the Government offered to buy the Hall and lot outright for \$78,000. A formal agreement of sale was drawn up, Congress voted the money, the State approved by legislative action, and the Society actually tendered the conveyance.²² But again fate interfered. The Attorney General refused to consummate the sale because of the limitations on the use of the property imposed by the Act of 1784 giving the lot to the Society. This created a curious dilemma in which the United States Government had obtained a property which it refused to accept, despite the fact that the highest authorities had officially endorsed the transaction. The impasse gave rise to an extraordinary situation. Aroused by the plan of the federal government to use Philosophical Hall for the courts and build a new post office in the Old Philadelphia area, a wave of opposition developed. According to an editorial in *The Morning Pennsylvanian* for May 18, 1859, more than 60,000 persons petitioned Washington to abandon the plan, sell Philosophical Hall and the Pennsylvania Bank, which had also been bought by the government, to the City, and use the money to build a post office and a new court house "further up town." Authorities in Washington were agreeable. Philosophical Hall and the Bank were placed in the hands of Thomas & Sons,

²¹ Amer. Philos. Soc. Archives.

²² Amer. Philos. Soc. Archives. Copy of the Articles signed and sealed with seal of the Secretary of the Interior.

Philadelphia Exchange, May 17th, 1859. 7

No. 9.

EXTRA VALUABLE REAL ESTATE

BY ORDER OF

THE UNITED STATES.

PROPERTY, INDEPENDENCE SQUARE,

Fifth Street South of Chesnut,

Formerly owned and occupied by the

AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

Opposite the Philadelphia Library.

All that valuable lot of ground and the brick building thereon erected, situate on the west side of Fifth street, 96 feet south of Chesnut street; containing in front on Fifth street 70 feet, and extending in depth westwardly of that width on Independence Square 50 feet, being the same property which the Philosophical Society granted and conveyed to the United States, to be used for the purposes and business of courts of justice and offices and officers connected therewith.

A copy of the deed of conveyance, &c., may be seen at the Auction Rooms, south Fourth street.

No. 10.

BY ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES.

The Elegant Marble Edifice,

FORMERLY THE

BANK of PENNSYLVANIA,

And Lot of Ground, having Four Fronts, viz:

On Second St., on Dock St. opposite the Ex.

FIG. 4. Advertisement of sale of Philosophical Hall by the United States.

auctioneers and were advertised for public sale (fig. 4) on May 17, 1859.

On its part, City Councils passed an ordinance empowering the Mayor to bid up to \$78,000 for the Hall.²³ In accordance with this mandate, the Mayor attended the auction at the Merchants' Exchange on the evening of May 17, but refused to bid, despite the auctioneer's protracted efforts. The hints of the editor of the journal just cited, that there was collusion between the Mayor and "the sharp gentlemen of the Philosophical Society" do not concern us. What is important is the fact that there was no sale, and the ownership of Philosophical Hall again lay between the United States and the Society. Since the former didn't want it, and the Society naturally paid no attention to the gratuitous advice of the editor to "give it to the City," the Hall remained in its possession.

PLANS FOR NEW CITY HALL ON INDEPENDENCE SQUARE

During the next decade the City finding itself more and more in need of accommodations for its courts, again made overtures for the purchase of Philosophical

²³ Ordinances and joint resolutions of the Select and Common Councils . . . from January 1 to December 31, Philadelphia, 1859, p. 210-211.

Hall. An ordinance of 1863, authorizing the lease of the first floor and basement at an annual rental of \$3,000 carried the *proviso* that the American Philosophical Society agreed to sell its Hall to the City for a sum not exceeding \$78,000 at any time within a period of five years. Expecting the City to exercise its option, the Society on its part secured an option for the purchase at \$16,000, on the Butt Doble Stables on South Penn Square. But the City again withdrew from its proposal, and the Society surrendered its right to the Penn Square lot, which was later appraised at over a million dollars.

In the meantime the population of Philadelphia had increased more than twelve times from 54,000 in 1790, when the City Hall and Congress Hall on the Square were large enough to accommodate the administration and courts, to 674,000 in 1870. Overcrowding had become intolerable. New municipal buildings were absolutely necessary. Moreover, since the old ones were on Independence Square, City Council seemed to assume that the Square was the logical site for the new buildings. Hence the extraordinary ordinance of 1868. On December 31 of that year, Select and Common Councils passed an ordinance²⁴ which appointed

Commissioners for the erection of Public Buildings for the accommodation of the Courts and all the City and County offices . . . that the said buildings shall be erected on Independence Square [and,] that upon completion of the buildings herein authorized to be erected, all the present buildings upon Independence Square, with the exception of Independence Hall, shall be taken down and removed by the said Commissioners.

One shudders to think of the crushing weight of Philadelphia's vast City Hall on the nation's historic Square, and its transformation into the rialto of Philadelphia's city politics (fig. 5). Fortunately the proposed desecration aroused public opinion to the point of action. A veritable furor of opposition developed, not only because of the threat to Independence Square, but because population and business had already moved westward, and the preponderant element was anxious to have the public buildings up-town. Appeal was made to the Legislature at Harrisburg, and the State intervened. On March 30, 1870, an act was passed setting up a special commission with extraordinary powers for "the erection of the public buildings" in Philadelphia, and

to locate the said buildings in either Washington square or Penn square as may be determined by a vote of the legally qualified voters . . . at the next general election in October . . . and provided further that . . . upon the completion of a sufficient portion of said buildings to accommodate the courts and municipal offices, the buildings now occupied by them respectively, shall be vacated and removed, and upon the entire completion of the new buildings, *all the present buildings on Independence square, except Independence*

²⁴ *Ordinances and Joint Resolutions* of the City of Philadelphia from January 1st to December 31, 1868, 571-573, Phila., 1869.



FIG. 5. Philadelphia's City Hall on Center Square.

*ence Hall, shall be removed,*²⁵ the ground placed in good condition by said Commission, as part of their duty under this act, the expense of which shall be paid out of their general fund provided by this act; and thereupon the said Independence square shall be and remain a public walk and green forever.²⁶

The substitution of Washington, and Penn Square, for Independence Square removed all danger of the desecration of the latter. On the other hand, the proposed mandate to remove all the buildings except Independence Hall drew particular attention to Philosophical Hall as the only privately owned building on the Square. For the next two decades this created a feeling of insecurity—a threat from without hanging like a sword of Damocles over the Society's deliberation. Hostility on the part of certain citizens appears repeatedly in the late eighties and early nineties. A rather mild editorial in the *Public Ledger* of November 21, 1889, reads:

ANCIENT AND HONORABLE

The Hall which in its external architecture and general dinginess of appearance resembles the City and County buildings on the Chestnut Street corners of the Square, is generally understood to be a city building. Very few . . . know that it is occupied in any other way than to furnish rooms for the judges, jurors, suitors, witnesses and officers for the Court of Common Pleas Number 1.

On its part the Society seemed to accept the necessity of removal. In his address on the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the occupation of Philosophical Hall, President Fraley, speaking with deep emotion, said:

I feel embarrassed when I have to talk of our parting with our ancient home. It is associated in my mind with so much pleasure, with so much instruction, that perhaps I ought to hope that I may not live to see the Society part

²⁵ Italics by the author.

²⁶ Laws of the General Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania passed at the Session of 1870. No. 1404. See volume of Laws of 1871, Appendix, pp. 1548-1550.



FIG. 6. The third story, 1890-1949.

with it. But there are considerations connected with this subject which I think ought to weigh with the members of the Society, when they consider the vast amount of precious treasures that we have accumulated here in the shape of our library, our collections, our manuscripts, our portraits, and so many things of which all feel pride in the possession.²⁷

Philosophical Hall with Congress Hall and City Hall was set apart for demolition, it being supposed, as President Fraley expressed it with rather mild sarcasm, that Independence Hall "would be sufficient monument to perpetuate all the patriotic thoughts that cluster around the City of Philadelphia." Strange as it may seem, however, his anxiety even at the time was no longer necessary. The public and the legislature had lost interest. On its part, the Society decided to enlarge the Hall in a manner calculated to arouse even more hostility to its presence on the Square.

THE FOLLY OF THE THIRD STORY

Finding its Hall increasingly inadequate and overcrowded, the Society appointed a special committee, called the "Committee on Extended Accommodations," and on its recommendation voted to add a third story to accommodate its library. To do this, the walls had to be strengthened and iron pillars installed in the rooms on the first and second floors to carry the extra load. The entire improvements including the new book cases in the large upper library room cost the sum of \$41,449.72.

The costly addition of the "dungeon-like" superstructure (fig. 6) to the exterior violated all the canons of conservation and reconstruction, destroying completely the original harmony of the buildings on the Square.²⁸ Moreover, to add insult to injury, the Society publicly solicited tenants, drew attention to the attractiveness of the rooms since the remodeling, and offered further

²⁷ *Public Ledger*, Nov. 22, 1889. Also *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 27: 6, 1889.

²⁸ For a more detailed account see Lingelbach, W. E., *Old Philadelphia: redevelopment and conservation*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 93 (2): 188-189, 1949.

alterations on long-term contracts. This raised the question of profits and competition by a tax-exempt institution. Hostility flared up once more, and a strong movement to dislodge the Society from the Square got under way. An ordinance to that effect was introduced in City Council with the vigorous support of a number of civic and patriotic organizations, private individuals, and the city press.²⁹ But again wiser counsel prevailed, the agitation subsided and the Society's occupation of the Hall was not again officially challenged. Instead, despite President Fraley's fears, it continued to occupy Philosophical Hall with a satisfied feeling that the building with the added story was now adequate for its needs.

The fallacy of this assumption was not, however, long in appearing. In less than two decades, evidences of overcrowding again appeared (fig. 7). This, coupled with worries over finances and other conditions, led to a prolonged agitation within the Society itself to abandon the Hall.

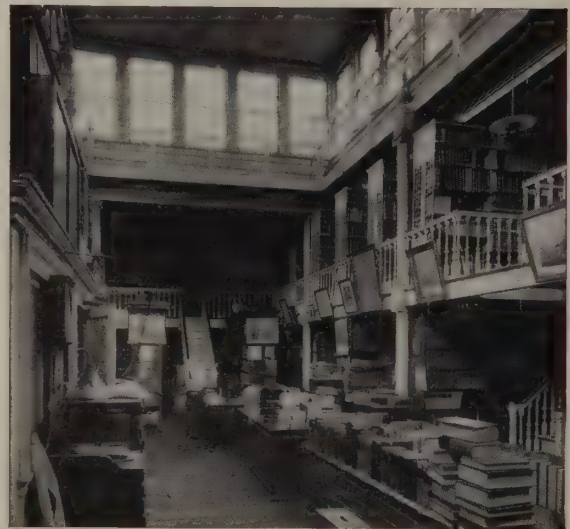


FIG. 7. The overcrowded library quarters several decades after the addition of the third story.

PROJECT TO EXCHANGE HALL FOR LOT ON THE PARKWAY

Troubled by the steady increase of its library and cabinets, and the consequent overcrowding of its own quarters, a decided change occurred in the attitude of some of the officers and members of the Society toward the Hall following the first decade of the twentieth century. Equally, if not more important, was the drastic decline in rentals caused by the exodus of business and financial institutions from the downtown area. To these very substantial considerations was added still another, in the attractions of the new Franklin Parkway to which

²⁹ *Cp.* editorials and articles in the newspapers—*Telegraph, Record*, and *Bulletin* in the summer of 1891, and the Records of City Council for the nineties.



FIG. 8. The proposed palace on the Parkway.

the city authorities tried earnestly to bring as many of the learned and cultural institutions as possible. The prospects had a strong appeal for many members of the Society, the more so because it was expected that the State Legislature would make a generous contribution.

The two hundredth anniversary (1906) of Franklin's birth furnished a favorable occasion. An application was made to the Legislature for \$350,000. Although received favorably by the Senate, the House refused to approve the proposal. Instead a modest appropriation of \$35,000 which Governor Pennypacker cut to \$20,000 was voted to celebrate the Bicentenary.³⁰

Nevertheless the agitation within the Society continued. A committee appointed to study the question strongly recommended removal to the Parkway. In a printed circular of May 9, 1911, signed by sixty members, calling for a special meeting of the Society to consider the matter, vigorous arguments in favor of the proposals were advanced. Denouncing sentimentality in a matter that offered such alluring material advantages, it pointed out that all other venerable institutions, save

³⁰ It was in response to this celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of Franklin's birth that the Federal Government appropriated \$5,000 to enable the Secretary of State to have a medal struck to commemorate the event, a single impression in gold to be presented on behalf of the President of the United States to the Representative of France, and two hundred in bronze for other purposes.



FIG. 9. Independence Hall and the crowded area to the north and east with Philosophical Hall, restored to its original design, in the right foreground.

the Athenaeum, had been moved westward; that the American Philosophical Society could not afford again to let opportunity pass it by—"to neglect this chance," it declared, "is to throw away a treasure. Three times did the Sibyl tender leaves of wisdom, and it was wise to act, even though tardily."³¹ The Minutes of the meeting of May 10, at which the report was adopted show fifty-seven yeas and only seven nays. On the other hand, it should be noted that it represented the local rather than the general membership, the latter, at this period of the Society's history, rarely attending special meetings. However, in accordance with this resolution, an agreement was entered into on November 11, 1911, with the City to exchange Philosophical Hall for a lot on the Parkway in the vicinity of Logan Square.³²

Efforts to raise a building fund were again made. As on an earlier occasion, they failed, and for some years no progress was made. In the late twenties, however, a concerted and altogether extraordinary campaign proved more successful. In addition to the usual publicity on such occasions, two special publications were issued; one, an attractive folio volume entitled *When Aristotle Comes Again* (fig. 8), the other a smaller volume with the equally intriguing title, *Mankind Advancing, A Message of Progress*. As examples of effective promotion by a learned and scientific society, they are remarkable. The names of ranking scientists and scholars are found in the list of contributors to the Aristotle volume. In fairness to the scholars, however, it should be noted that most of them had in mind contributions for a new Franklin House without apparently realizing the significance of removal from Independence Square. Many of the finest statements, therefore, stress the value and importance of the opportunities for cooperative efforts and achievements in science and learning afforded by the Society, rather than the removal so strenuously advocated by some of the officers.

In the introduction and in the campaign generally, however, much emphasis was laid on the inadequacy of Philosophical Hall and the fire-hazards, not only because of the old and defective interior appointments, but because of the proximity of other buildings in the neighborhood (fig. 9). Nearly a million dollars was subscribed. While reasonably large, this was obviously inadequate for so large an undertaking. But the enthusiasts for the project were in command, and for a time it looked as though the Society would voluntarily abandon its historic home for a very questionable venture, without adequate endowment in a palace on the Parkway. Fortunately opposition to the plan was becoming quite pronounced when the problem of financing the Society was happily solved.

³¹ Printed call for "the special meeting on Wednesday evening, May 10th," 1911.

³² Office of the Recorder of Deeds. Deed book, J. M. H. No. 604, p. 148.

PENROSE BEQUEST—SOCIETY RETAINS PHILOSOPHICAL HALL

In 1932 the Society received nearly four million dollars bequeathed to it by its late member, Dr. Richard A. F. Penrose, Jr., of Philadelphia (fig. 10). Added to other funds, it completely eliminated all financial reasons for removal from Independence Square. Temporary quarters were found for the Library in the old home of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange in the Drexel Building in 1934, and at its Annual Meeting in 1936, the Society by a unanimous vote instructed its officers to seek the annulment of "the agreement or contract between the City of Philadelphia and the Society, dated November 24, 1911." On their part, the Mayor and City Councils were agreeable. The contract was an-



FIG. 10. Richard A. F. Penrose, Jr. (1863-1931), scientist and benefactor.

nulled and the Society's title to its lot and Hall on Independence Square was again officially confirmed by an Ordinance of March 30, 1936. After reciting the contractual agreements between the city and the Society, and the Ordinances of 1911 and 1933, it says:

And Whereas, It is the desire of both parties to the said contract of November 24, 1911, to withdraw from the negotiations and contractual duties, rights and obligations therein more fully described, to cancel and annul the said contract and to repeal the enabling legislation above described; now therefore. . . .

The Mayor is then empowered to implement the cancellation provided in the Ordinance, and the City Solicitor is ordered to cooperate in the execution thereof and

in having the proper record made of the matter in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds.

Approved the thirtieth day of March A.D. 1936.
S. Davis Wilson,
Mayor of Philadelphia ³³

After this extraordinary ending to the campaign, the question of the subscriptions which had been made toward the Franklin House on the Parkway seemed at first thought to present a serious dilemma. To clarify the situation, steps were immediately taken to ascertain the wishes of the individual subscribers as to the disposition of their contributions to the fund for the building on the Parkway. Practically all agreed to have their pledges transferred to the general funds of the Society.

The importance of these developments in the work and future of the Society can be best appreciated by those familiar with the greatly increased activity in research, publications, and the library during the last decade. Furthermore, the decision to remain on Independence Square contributed in no small degree to the promotion of the great civic improvements inaugurated some years later in the area of Independence Square, and now in process of realization. The expression on the part of the membership at large of loyalty to, and appreciation of old traditions and environment was properly regarded as a tribute to the foresight of the Founders who in the beginning established the close association of Philosophical Hall—symbol of science and learning—with Independence Square, the nation's foremost shrine dedicated to liberty and patriotism.

IV

RENTALS AND DISTINGUISHED TENANTS

Quite early in the planning of the Hall proposals were made for renting the parts of the building not required for the use of the Society. Since nothing was said in the Act of March 28, 1785, about leasing the building, or parts of it, the Society petitioned the Assembly for the right to do so. This was readily granted by the supplementary act of August 14, 1786, the pertinent sections of which read:

. . . Be it therefore enacted. . . . That the American Philosophical Society held at Philadelphia, for promoting useful knowledge, shall be and they are hereby vested with full and sufficient power and Authority to let, or lease out, such Vaults, or Cellars as they may think proper to make under the Building to be by them erected on the Lot aforesaid, and shall have like power and Authority to let or lease any other parts of said Building, for such purposes as may have affinity with the design of their Institution and for no other — . . . that the Issues, or profits arising from such parts of the Building shall be applied to the purposes for which the said Society was Originally instituted, and to no other, any—

³³ Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia from January 1 to December 31, 1936, and opinions of the City Solicitor, Philadelphia, 1937, pp. 105-107.

thing in the Act to which this is a Supplement to the Contrary notwithstanding.³⁴

In accordance with the provisions of this Act, tenants were selected with considerable care. An application from the Masons was rejected as not sufficiently in "affinity with the design" of the Society. On the other hand, John Vaughan, for many years librarian, in 1787 rented the cellars for "the storage of wines and liquors." Until the second decade of the present century, rents and dues were the principal source of income, the presence of successive tenants, usually of a quite distinguished character, making the story of Philosophical Hall both more complicated and more colorful.

The University of Pennsylvania was the second successful applicant for space. In 1789 it obtained a lease for five years of Philosophical Hall, except for the two south rooms and the cellars for a rental of £85 a year, on condition that it furnish materials to complete such parts of the interior as was necessary, the cost to be deducted from the rent. By special agreement with the Assembly the Liberty Bell proclaimed not "liberty through all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof," but the call to classes beginning at six in the morning for eager, if sleepy, students. In 1791 the two south rooms on the second floor were ordered to be finished, and later occupied by the Society and other organizations for their weekly or monthly meetings. Moreau de St. Méry reports that the College of Physicians met in the Hall of the Society every Wednesday evening and on special occasions. One of these occasions during the Yellow Fever epidemic of 1793, described by Dr. Powell, in his excellent book, *Bring Out Your Dead*, is of especial significance:

On Sunday afternoon, trudging through the fury of the northeast storm, Dr. Hutchinson made his way to State House Yard. He entered the little building of the American Philosophical Society and climbed up the stairs to the chamber of the College of Physicians. The Fellows were gathering. It was an extraordinary thing, this special meeting the Mayor had requested. It was the first time the city had ever asked the Fellows a purely medical question. Indeed, it was the first time in American history any organized medical society had been appealed to by a government, and the Fellows were sensible of their responsibilities. The city expected leadership from them, and decision, and encouragement—expected whatever help the best of medical science could give.³⁵

PEALE'S MUSEUM AND OTHER TENANTS

Upon the expiration of the University's lease, the Society raised the rent and, according to the record, found a more "desirable tenant" in Charles Willson Peale and his Museum (fig. 11). For the next fifteen years the

³⁴ Statutes at large of Pennsylvania from 1682 to 1801, compiled . . . by James T. Mitchell and Henry Flanders, 12 (1785-1787): 198-199, Harrisburg, 1906.

³⁵ Powell, J. H., *Bring out your dead*, 30, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1949.



FIG. 11. Philosophical Hall in the background during its occupancy by Peale's Museum. Engraving by Birch (1799).

Hall witnessed the animated domestic and intensely interesting professional life of this remarkable man—artist, educator, and inventor, a close friend of Jefferson and of all liberals. His large family and famous museum crowded the Hall beyond capacity, and a section of a part of State House Square was leased to accommodate the constantly increasing specimens and menagerie of native animals. Of passing interest is the fact that of his two sons born in Philosophical Hall, the older, Franklin, was formally named by the Society. The father, apparently hard put to it to find another appropriate name to add to Rembrandt, Titian, Rubens, and Raphaelle, proposed such an impossible name that the mother, being of the New York DePeysters, and strongly attached to family names, objected vigorously. The matter was submitted to the Society which resolved that the boy should be named “Franklin.” This was, of course, only one of many interesting incidents (fig. 12) in the busy life of Philosophical Hall which housed America's earliest successful museum from 1794 to 1811. The first insurance policy on the building was taken out on May 7, 1794, possibly because of the increased risk. Lightning rods had been put up in 1791. Whether this was done out of respect for Franklin, or belief in their efficacy, doesn't appear in the record. Some years before, the Society seriously debated the question: “May we place Rods on our Houses to save them from Lightning without being guilty of Presumption”?

After Peale moved the museum to Independence Hall in 1811, other tenants gradually secured accommodations in different parts of the building. Just what the conditions of tenancy were, or what parts of the Hall each occupied is not important. The following letter by



FIG. 12. Staircase portrait by Charles Willson Peale of Titian and Raphaelle Peale. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The painting was used, writes Charles Coleman Sellers in his life of Charles Willson Peale (*Mem. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 23 (2): 71-72, 1947), to fill “an unused door frame in the Museum with a real step built out below to add to the illusion and it is said that President Washington, invited to view some Indian figures in costume had been taken in by the hoax, courteously bowing as he passed the picture.”

John Vaughan, acquired by the library since this study was begun, is very suggestive on this score:

Dr. Thomas Parke
V.P. of the College of Physicians

Philad April 6, 1818

Dr. Sir

The American Philosophical Society, having been applied to by the Agricultural Society to be allowed to hold their meetings monthly on such days as the College do not meet, are disposed to make the arrangement with them—The Athenaeum have also applied to hold their monthly meetings so as not to interfere with the College—Will you please to lay this before the College— . . . That the necessary arrangements may be made by the A.P.S. with the other Societies.

I remain with respect
Your obt Servt.
Jn. Vaughan.
Libn of Am. Ph. Socy

Vaughan himself had bachelor apartments in the Hall, and the well-known painter, Thomas Sully, advertised his studio and gallery from there (fig. 13).³⁶

THE CITY AND THE FEDERAL COURTS AS TENANTS

Mention has been made above of the use by the City of certain parts of the first floor and the basement for the Mayor's reception rooms in the late forties of the last century; to the occupation of the same quarters by the United States District Court for Eastern Pennsylvania; and the return of the City as a tenant in 1873 for the accommodation of the Court of Common Pleas No. 1. Having completely renovated the building and added the third story to accommodate the Library, the Society terminated the City's lease in 1891, and made the special appeal for new tenants referred to above.

With the Stock Exchange directly across the street in the Drexel Building, the new Bourse less than a square to the north, and the imposing solidity of numerous late Victorian bank and insurance company buildings, the area was entering the last period of prosperity as the city's financial and commercial center. Prospects for profitable rentals were excellent. The attractive character of the new quarters in the Hall was conspicuously advertised, and in the decades that followed investment and insurance brokers and others paid rental in excess of \$5,000 annually.

RENTS DECLINE AS BUSINESS LEAVES OLD PHILADELPHIA

Toward the end of the period, however, the removal of the Stock Exchange to other quarters, the competition of the new Bourse Building with its more than four hundred offices, and the increasing exodus to the uptown area led to a drastic falling off in the rentals. In 1913 the Committee on Hall reported:

³⁶ I am indebted to Mr. C. C. Sellers for a copy of the advertisement by Sully, the original of which is at the Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia.

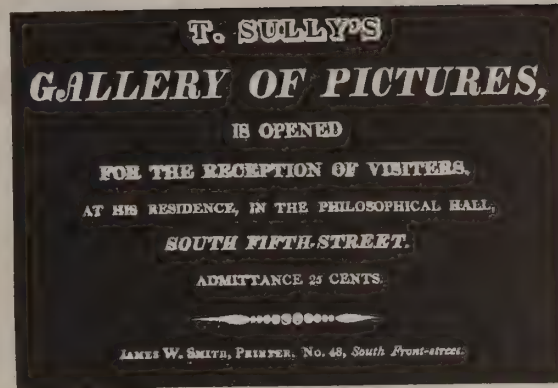


FIG. 13. Thomas Sully's advertisement of his gallery in Philosophical Hall where he maintained his studio from 1812 to 1822.

The changes incident to the removal of the Stock Exchange have affected the renting of the offices most unfavorably. The entire first floor is vacant, and so far even very decided concessions in the amount of rental asked has failed to attract tenants.³⁷

By the end of 1915 conditions were almost desperate: "only one of the four offices in the building is rented, and although every effort has been made it seems impossible to get tenants for the others at any rental whatsoever."³⁸ Although conditions became somewhat better later, the improvement was not sufficient to overcome the financial stringency which became a major cause for the campaign to exchange the Hall for a lot on the Parkway. From this dilemma the Society was finally rescued by the generous bequest of Dr. Penrose. The rental policy could now be discontinued. In 1934 all leases were terminated, and the Society for the first time took over all of Philosophical Hall for its own purposes.

V

MORE THAN BRICKS AND MORTAR

Buildings like Philosophical Hall, and those to which it is companion on this historic Square, are much more than bricks and mortar, no matter how successfully these may have been translated into beautiful structures. They are what they are, and they speak the language they speak, because of the events, the men, and the ideas that have been associated with them. As for Philosophical Hall with its fine new-old look within and without (fig. 1), more than incidental notice should be made of the very successful remodeling of the interior so completely in accord with the best colonial tradition. The difficult problem of the steep ascent of the stairs opposite the Fifth Street en-

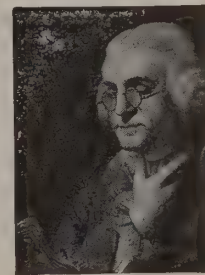


FIG. 14.

³⁷ Report of the Committee on Hall, December 1, 1913.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, December 3, 1915.

trance caused by the city's demand, when the Hall was under construction, that the steps be brought from the sidewalk into the interior of the Hall, has been very successfully handled. An attractive marble stairway quite original in design; the semicircular treatment of the wall on either side of the doorway to conceal the dumbwaiter shaft and unsightly pipes; and the introduction of a five-point depressed arch adding width and dignity, have together greatly reduced what used to be an excessively high and angular approach to the main hall. It now has, not only an attractiveness all its own, but is closely integrated with the rest of the interior into a harmonious whole.

PORTRAITS AND MEMORABILIA WITH ASSOCIATIONS

But while this and the remodeling of the rest of the interior has been done with a sympathetic feeling for the spirit of colonial building, it is the portraits, memorabilia, and archives that create the atmosphere which gives it warmth and life. Hence brief comments on some of the more outstanding features of this character

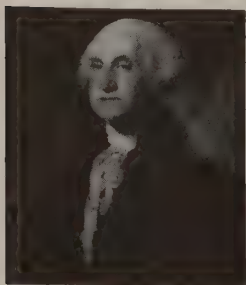


FIG. 15.

as they appear in the Hall today is necessary. This is all the more so because of the present effective distribution, for there is much more of purpose and motivation in the new arrangements than at first appears. The main principle was recognized in the Lecture Room after it was remodeled by our late fellow member, Dr. Paul Cret. The well-known thumb portrait of Franklin by Charles Willson Peale after Martin is appropriately in the place of honor over the chair of the presiding officer (fig. 14). Its prestige is greatly enhanced by the portrait of Washington by Gilbert Stuart on the right and that of Jefferson by Thomas Sully on the left. Like so many of the

others, they have an especial association with the Hall and the Society.

The three original Martin portraits were ordered by Sir William Alexander out of gratitude to Franklin for reading and commenting on Alexander's scientific papers. The first was done for Alexander himself. Later when he offered to have Martin do one for Franklin, Franklin had the elaborately carved chair of the original replaced by the simple one more in harmony with the rest of the picture as seen here in Peale's copy. The papers Franklin is reading are supposedly those sent him by Alexander, the bust of Newton suggesting their scientific character. Our painting was given to the Society by Peale in 1785, and accepted with thanks on December 16 of that year with the request that the artist keep it until the Society got a proper place for it. In our printed Minutes the editor says the portrait was done by Peale from life at the request of the Society on July 17, 1789.³⁹ This is incorrect because the Martin portrait of Franklin shows him in robust middle life, and, according to Peale's own account, Franklin was too ill for a sitting when he, accompanied by young Rembrandt Peale, went to Franklin's home at the behest of the Society to make the portrait. The portrait⁴⁰ by Peale of Franklin late in life at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania reveals a very different Franklin.

The fine portrait of Washington by Gilbert Stuart (fig. 15) was definitely done in response to a commission from the Society (fig. 16). When it was finished, a Committee of three was sent to view it. They reported it as satisfactory, and the portrait was duly purchased.

Jefferson by Thomas Sully, the most highly appraised financially and artistically of all our portraits, was presented to the Society by William Short in 1830, a gift

³⁹ Cp. printed Minutes, July 17, 1789, Early Proceedings of the Society, 1744-1838, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 22 (3): 174, 1884.

⁴⁰ For a scholarly account of Peale's Portraits of Franklin, see Sellers, C. C., *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 94: 251-257, 1950.

In conformity to a resolution of the Society at a ^{special} Meeting of Dec^r 27th 1789 - a Portrait of the late General Washington, painted by Stuart was presented for their inspection, & was referred to a Committee of Mr. Wm^l Hamilton - Mr. Labadie & Dr. Jacobs, to report on its merits previous to any order for its purchase. -

FIG. 16. The Minute on the Washington portrait.

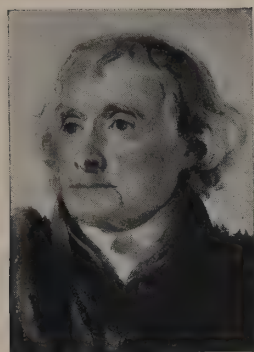


FIG. 17.

that fitly commemorates Jefferson's presidency of the Society for eighteen years, and his active interest in its work for even a longer period (fig. 17).

On the rear wall of the Lecture Room are portraits of early officers of the Society including Caspar Wistar and Du Ponceau. The Society's commission for the portrait of its second president, David Rittenhouse (fig. 18) is clearly

told in the following Minute under date of December 2, 1791:

Resolved, that Dr. Rittenhouse be requested to sit for his portrait, and the same be painted by Mr. Peale, at the expense of the Society, to be placed in their Hall.

At the same time it was

Resolved, that the Portrait of Dr. Franklin presented some time ago by Mr. Peale be framed in the best manner that the work can be executed for a price not exceeding Six Pounds.

Pine's portrait of Samuel Vaughan (fig. 3), which also hangs on this wall, has been discussed above.

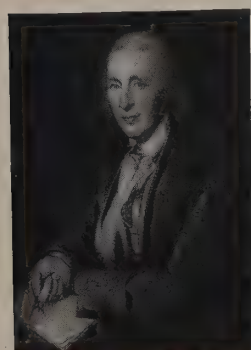


FIG. 18.

Across the hall from the Lecture Room, the portrait of former President Morris appears conspicuously on the south wall of the secretary's office, appropriately placed because of his devotion to the cause of keeping the Society in Philadelphia, and his close cooperation with Presidents Russell and Conklin, whose portraits are now hung on the east and west walls of the office. In the reception room to the left are now

seen portraits of Priestley, Heckewelder and others including the remarkable portrait by Thomas Sully of Benjamin Rush (fig. 19) which may prove to be the long sought original of the many familiar Rush portraits.

One other feature of the first floor merits attention. Not only is the treatment of the interior of the Hall on the Fifth Street side best seen from the west entrance, but the door on the yard (fig. 20) is in itself quite lovely, and should, as the late president, Dr. Conklin, has frequently suggested, be made our main entrance. Since our location on Independence Square is unique, and all discordant notes, architecturally speaking, have been removed, we can in this way not only show appreciation of our historic environment, but greatly increase the

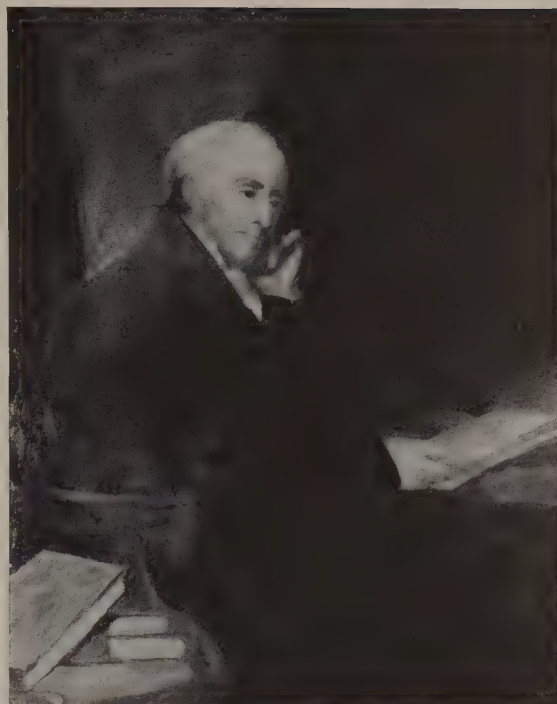


FIG. 19. Rush by Thomas Sully.

dignity and charm that attaches to Philosophical Hall itself.

On the second floor, the north room, immediately over the Lecture Room, has been changed more than any of the others. The vault, which was built at a late date,

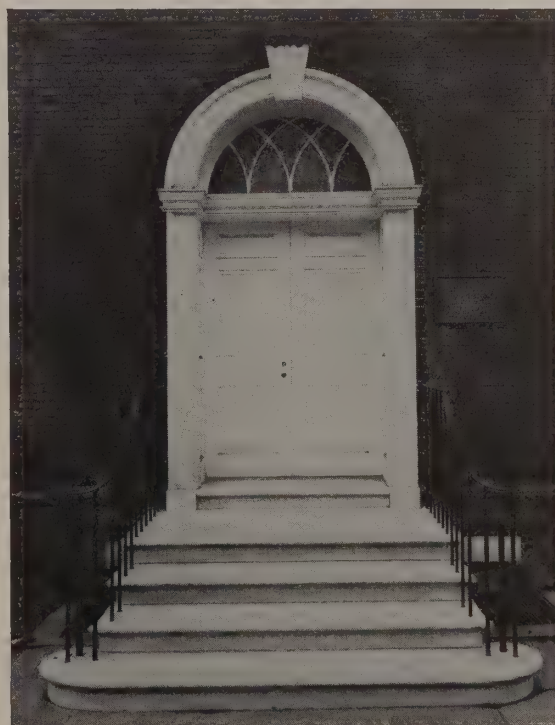


FIG. 20. Doorway facing Independence Hall.

and intruded into the southeast corner of the room thus destroying its original character entirely, has been removed. This affords a clear approach to a concealed dumbwaiter by which luncheons and dinners can now be brought from an up-to-date kitchen in the basement direct to the serving tables at the east end of the room, eliminating what has for years been a nuisance and inconvenience, arising from bringing refreshments from the third floor. Happily this adaptation of the room to the practical needs of the Society has also resulted in restoring it to its original proportions, except, as in the

second visit to the province, it recalls his well-known comment:

Ye shall be governed by laws of your own making, and live a free and if you will a sober people.

The south, or Members' Room, across the hall on the second floor is dominated, as one enters, by the portrait over the President's chair of Alexander von Humboldt (fig. 22), the great philosopher of nature, when philosophy still included nearly all fields of learning. It brings to mind his *Cosmos*, possibly the greatest of those books

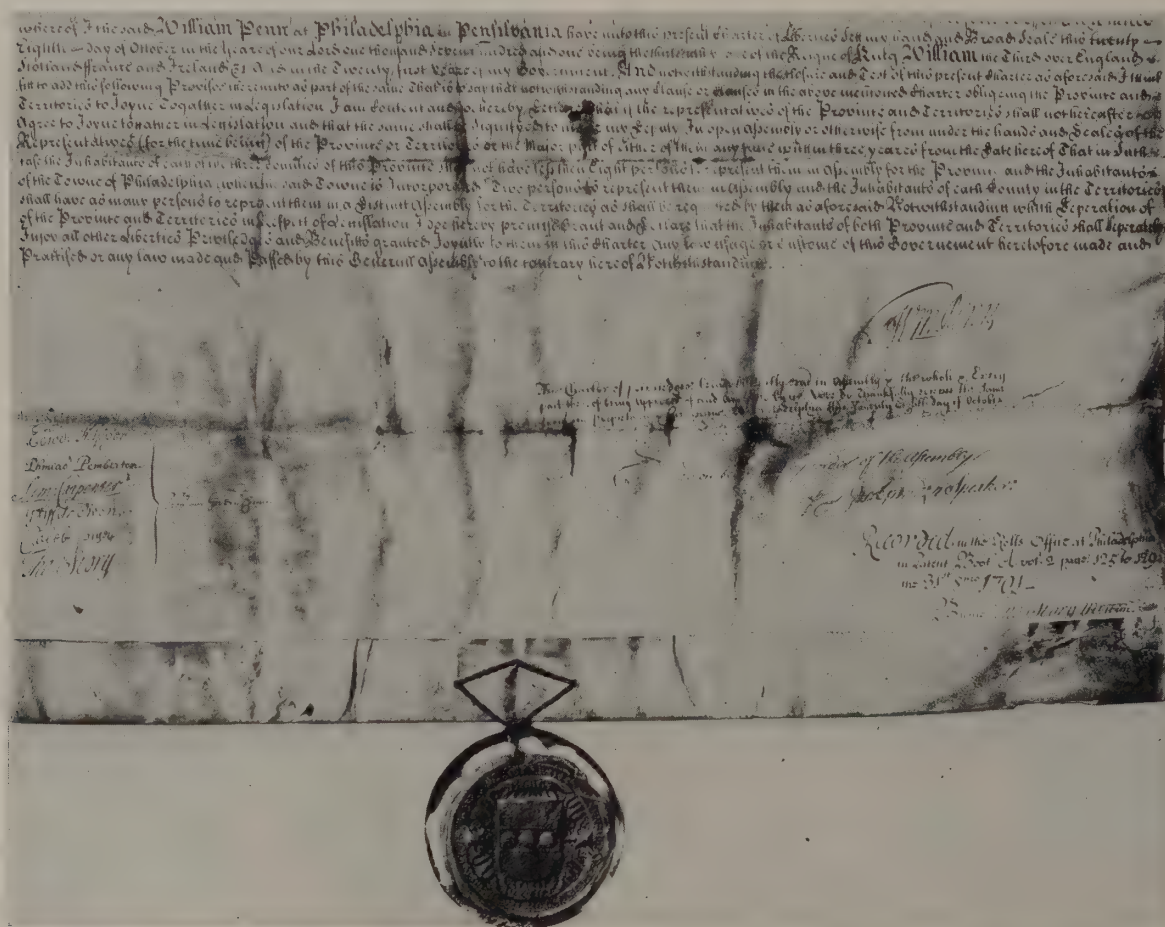


FIG. 21. A part of William Penn's Charter of Privileges of 1701, showing signatures and the Great Seal.

rest of the rooms, for a lowering of the ceiling and a furring of outer walls to conceal pipes and other structural installations. Two fine colonial fireplaces, similar to those in the Members' Room, on the wall opposite the entrance give period atmosphere appropriate to one of the very rare treasures of the Society—the original of William Penn's great Charter of Privileges of 1701 (fig. 21). In excellent state of preservation with the Great Seal intact, it was returned to its place in this room after its extended tour with the Freedom Train. Granted by the Founder upon leaving for England at the end of his

of universal knowledge, before the development of the intense specialization of the last century and a half; a trend admirably illustrated by the two former presidents of the Society whose portraits flank von Humboldt—Dr. W. W. Keen and Professor William B. Scott, the first an eminent surgeon, the other an equally eminent geologist. The room as it used to be is seen in figure 23. Behind the President's desk, for many years, stood the ingenious library stepladder chair (fig. 24), invented by Franklin and presented to the Society by his son-in-law, Richard Bache, as "the chair in which his Father-

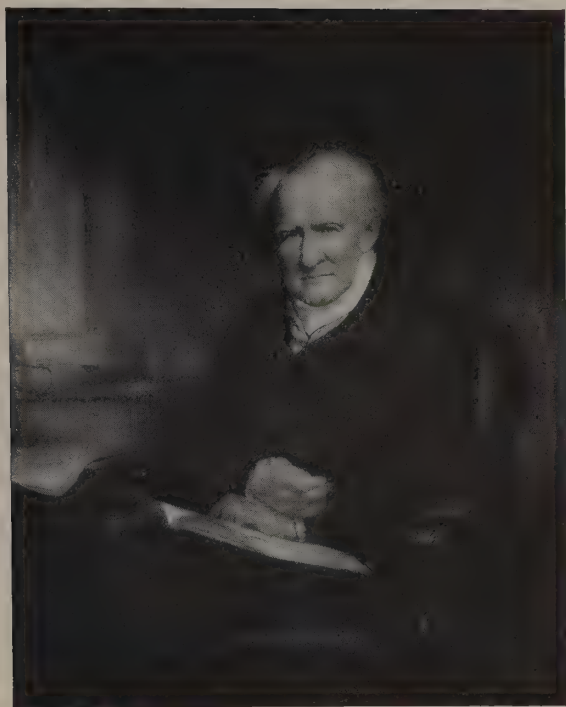


FIG. 22. von Humboldt by J. R. Lambdin.

in-Law, Dr. Franklin, used to sit when the Meetings of the Society were held at his House." In the new arrangement this chair is no longer used by the presiding officer, but occupies a place of honor on his right, while Jefferson's revolving arm chair with a very wide arm rest (fig. 25) on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence is on the left of the rostrum. Rittenhouse's clock, still accurately ticking the seconds, his telescope, used in the observations of the transit of Venus in 1769, are now back in their accustomed places while the electrical apparatus used by Franklin, with other memorabilia, are in the cabinets on the north wall.

Above these to the right of the door as one enters there is a remarkable, and heretofore unknown portrait



FIG. 23. The Members' Room as it used to be.

of Franklin (fig. 26). Acquired in 1949 through the enterprise of Dr. Chinard, it is a superb addition not only to the room, but to the portraits of Franklin in general. The artist is not known, but the provenance is thoroughly established.⁴¹ Presented by Franklin to the daughter of Madame Helvétius on the occasion of her marriage, it remained in her family till its recent acquisition by the Society. A strong, understanding, and somewhat quizzical Franklin now takes his place in the Executive Sessions of the Society he founded, and served as president for more than two decades. On the other side of the door on the same wall is the portrait after J. Vanderbank of Sir Isaac Newton (fig. 27), another recent and appropriate acquisition—the mathematical genius and philosopher of the *Principia* (1687) on one side, and the speculative empiricist of *Experiments and Observations on Electricity* (1751) on the other.



FIG. 24. Franklin's library chair.

PHILOSOPHICAL HALL AND THE SOCIETY AT WORK

Philosophical Hall as it stands today again meets the aesthetic demands of its environment, as well as most of the practical needs of the Society. Although space has been lost in the removal of the third story, some has been regained in the remodeling of the west end of the basement formerly occupied by the caretaker and his family, affording room for current publications and the new vault. On the other hand, the activities of the Society have increased to such an extent that even with the separate housing of the Library, the Hall is used to capacity. An account of the numerous worthwhile projects, organizations, and publications that have emanated from the collective thought and association in the Hall would take us too far afield.⁴² On the other hand,

⁴¹ Cf. Gilbert Chinard, Abbé Lefebvre de la Roche's recollections of Benjamin Franklin, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 94: 214-221, 1950.

⁴² For an excellent survey of these activities in recent years, see Dr. Conklin's *Brief history of the American Philosophical Society* revised and brought up-to-date in the current *Year Book*.



FIG. 25. Jefferson's chair with armrest on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence.

more than a casual reference should be made to the marked change in recent years in the character of the membership of the Society, and the corresponding change in the activities in and about the Hall.

The general meetings of the Society, begun early in the century and finally established in 1912, have served to bring together members from far and near, and this, coupled with the adoption of the new by-laws has led to the transformation of the Society from one that had become predominantly local to one more distinctly national in character. The fortnightly meetings on alternate Fridays of former years have been discontinued. Instead there are now two, or at the most three, general meetings a year, with the emphasis on the Annual Meeting and elections in April. This doesn't mean, however, that there has been a decline in the work of the Society. Quite the contrary. Today the meetings extend over several days instead of being confined to a single evening.

Moreover, and this is of especial significance, the effective work of the Society is now done by standing and special committees. The former meet four times or oftener a year; the latter on call of the chairman as occasion dictates. As a result, there are regularly more than one hundred members actually occupied with the Society's problems of research, publication, meetings, finance, library, and general policy. In all cases, discussions, rather than formal papers, mark the procedure. This usually follows a carefully developed agenda prepared in advance of the meeting. It focuses attention on the issues involved and facilitates the formulation of the collective opinion of the different groups on the

major problems of the Society. Neither the work of the committees, nor that of the officers and staff engaged in its promotion and integration is on display as are our portraits and memorabilia. But even the brief survey of it as it is presented annually in the *Year Book* clearly reveals that the story of Philosophical Hall today, more than ever before in its history, presents a constantly increasing devotion to the ideals projected by Franklin in his *Proposal* of 1743, two hundred years ago.

In one important respect, however, the work of the Society has developed far beyond the capacities of Philosophical Hall. As already noted, the Hall proved quite inadequate for the Library even after the addition of the third story. The lack of space, overcrowding, and the fire hazard were conspicuously stressed in the cam-

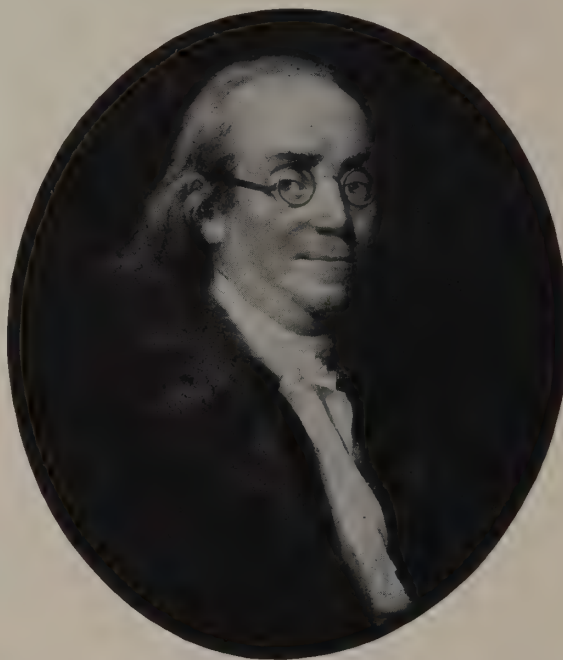


FIG. 26. Portrait of Franklin recently discovered in France.

paign to move from Independence Square to the Parkway. Finally, the matter was solved by transferring the Library altogether from Philosophical Hall to the Drexel Building across the street. At no time, however, was the arrangement regarded as anything but temporary even though a permanent solution of the problem was not in sight.

VI

PROJECT FOR A NEW LIBRARY BUILDING

For a learned and scientific society, the value of an attractive and distinguished home like Philosophical Hall cannot be easily overestimated. In the past it did much to hold the membership together in days of depression and crisis, providing the physical basis for continuity in the association of its members, promoting and

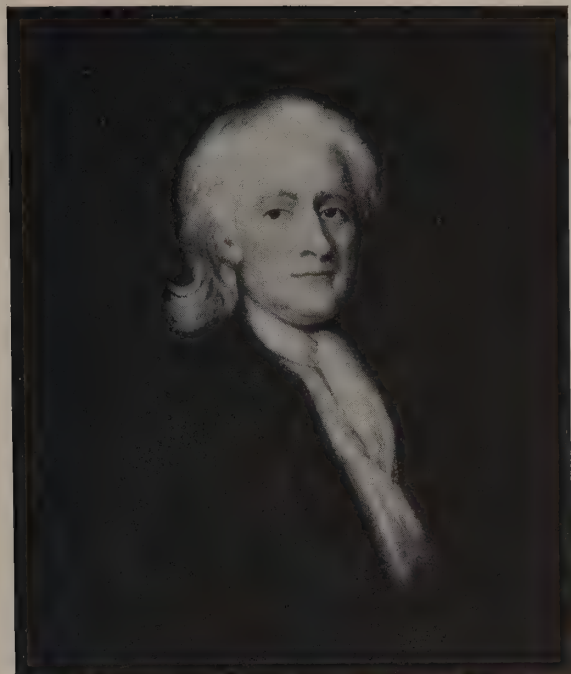


FIG. 27. Sir Isaac Newton after Vanderbank, 1725.

assisting projects of research and publication, and bringing together historical and scientific collections of great value in our Library. It has served as a powerful magnet for gifts and bequests which, with acquisitions acquired through purchases, in the heyday of prosperity in 1929 were appraised at thirty million dollars. Even

if considered only as a real estate venture, Philosophical Hall is by far the most successful investment made by the Society in the more than two hundred years of its history. The lot on the Parkway offered in exchange for our Hall in 1911 had cost the city over a million dollars. To these gratifying positive returns should be added the strong influence of an attractive and dignified home in keeping the Society alive and active. To those familiar with the record, the fate of the Society, had Philosophical Hall not been built, is fairly obvious. It makes one wonder how posterity would appraise an investment the Society might make some time during the next decade in a library building to house our great collections of manuscripts, imprints and books, and enable scholars to put them to work more efficiently. The need is imperative. We need research and conference rooms; a reading room adequately lighted and equipped with all the necessary works of reference; up-to-date laboratories for photography and microfilming, restoring manuscripts and books; a general work room for the staff; vaults secure against fire and water hazards, and air conditioning as far as possible.

In all the early proposals for a building, housing of the library was definitely associated with a place for meeting. The Minutes of July 19, 1783, for example, express it as follows: "It having been long in contemplation of this Society to purchase a lot . . . for the purpose of erecting a Hall for the reception of the Books and natural curiosities. . . ." This responsibility of providing for the Library has been accepted as axiomatic throughout the entire history of the Society. Again



FIG. 28. The Independence Square group surrounded on the east, west, and south by modern skyscrapers. The erection of the Drexel Building called for the demolition of the Library Company Building. The plans of the National Park Service involve the demolition of the Drexel Building in its turn, and clearing of the old site for Library Hall of the American Philosophical Society. Cf. Bill No. H.R. 6544. In the left foreground is the Old Custom House, once the Second Bank of the United States, and now a national shrine in which new quarters for the Society's Library were at one time seriously considered.



FIG. 29. Library Company of Philadelphia. Engraving by Birch (1799).

and again, as we have seen, it raised problems, the attempted solution of which, seriously influenced policies. After wandering from place to place before Rittenhouse, its first librarian, brought it together in his home, and later to "one of the chambers" in Philosophical Hall, it remained in the Hall till 1934. Since then it has occupied the old quarters of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange in the Drexel Building, developing rapidly as a highly specialized library in accordance with the policy approved by the Society in 1941. Now, however, it is again under the necessity of moving. As progress in the acquisition of properties by the Government in the Philadelphia National Historical Park area develops, the present home of the Library will disappear.

In anticipation of this, the Society gave careful consideration to available accommodations in the Old Custom House, or Second Bank of the U. S. (fig. 28) which was declared a national shrine in 1939 by the Department of the Interior, and later leased to the Carl Schurz Foundation. But the Parthenon, which served as the model for this fine example of the revival of classical architecture in this country, was not designed for library purposes. Moreover, its massive construction within and without made remodeling of even a minor sort extremely difficult and costly, quite apart from the watchful care of the Department of the Interior against structural modifications in national shrines. After a thorough examination of the possibilities, therefore, the plan was abandoned. Instead, the proposal repeatedly advanced in these pages, of erecting a separate building similar in design to the library of the old Philadelphia Library Company, was not only revived, but adopted by the Society.

Almost directly across from Philosophical Hall on the corner of Fifth and Library Streets, stood the fine old Georgian building (fig. 29) designed by William Thornton and erected in 1789-1790, for the oldest subscrip-

tion library in the country, founded by Franklin and his friends in 1731.

During the colonial and national periods, it was an integral part of the Independence Square—Carpenters' Hall group of buildings. Later it was joined by the new building of the Mercantile Library Company, erected in 1845, on the adjoining corner of Library Street, and the new Dispensary immediately to the east on Fifth Street (fig. 30). The group affords concrete evidence of the cultural and scientific interests of a neighborhood otherwise predominantly identified with the early political life of the nation. Unfortunately, all were demolished—Library Hall in 1887—in the so-called interest of business expansion.

The proximity of the site to Philosophical Hall, and the consequent ease of consulting the Library located at, or near, this spot by the publication and other departments of the Society, makes this an ideal location for practical, as well as historical and esthetic reasons.

The reconstruction of the Library Company building in its exterior design, giving careful consideration to the need of modernizing the interior, will meet the present and future needs of the Library in a thoroughly practical and efficient manner. At the same time it will make another contribution toward the restoration of the most remarkable group of historic buildings in this country (fig. 31). More than that, Philosophical Hall and Library Hall taken together will be a monument to Frank-

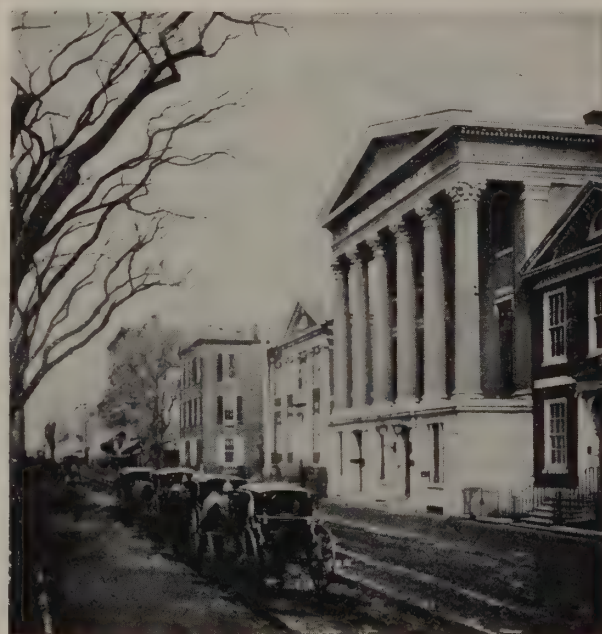


FIG. 30. Historic group in the late '80's on the east side of Fifth Street opposite Independence Square: the Old Library Hall, the Mercantile Library, and the Philadelphia Dispensary. The Library Company, the first subscription library in the United States, built by Franklin and his friends, 1789-1790, was demolished in 1887, the Mercantile Library and the Philadelphia Dispensary more recently. Courtesy of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

lin vastly superior to a Franklin House on the Parkway. It will be located amid the places he knew, where he walked and consorted with his friends. It will be less than three squares removed from his home in Franklin Court, now being studied for improvement and possibly restoration in connection with the Independence National Historical Park.⁴³ The significance of such a solution of our library problem cannot be easily overestimated.

Moreover, the foresight of members and patrons of our Society in the past provided for just such a contingency. Two substantial funds for building, carefully guarded in the terms of the bequest by the donors against other uses, have been made to the Society. Although a modest amount was used for the restoration of the Hall, the principal should, in accordance with the compound interest curve, increase rapidly enough to meet the proposed cost of the new library. Few investments, even from a purely financial standpoint, will net

the National Park Service, incorporated in an act passed by Congress and signed by the President late in July, 1952, the original site, which is in the very heart of the Independence National Historical Park is made available for the purpose. Section 3 of the law reads:

The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to permit the American Philosophical Society, a nonprofit corporation, without cost to the United States, to construct, operate, and maintain in the park a building to be located in approximately the original site of historic Library Hall to house the library of the American Philosophical Society and any additions to said library, such permission to be granted the society pursuant to a lease, contract, or authorization without charge, on such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Secretary and accepted by the society, and for such length of time as the society shall continue to use the said building for the housing, display, and use of a library and scientific and historical collections:

Provided, That the plans for the construction of the building and any addition thereto shall be approved by the Secretary of the Interior.



FIG. 31. Independence Square looking east from Sixth Street. 4. Philosophical Hall. 5. Library Company of Philadelphia. 6. Carpenters' Hall. *Columbian Magazine* 1790.

an equal return either on a short or long-term basis. The story of Philosophical Hall, and of other historic buildings and sites, as for example, the great conservation and restoration of Colonial Williamsburg, prove conclusively that the return in the form of those imponderables, frequently implied in this narrative, far exceeds even the highest financial or material returns.

HISTORIC SITE AND LIBRARY HALL IN INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK NOW ASSURED

The steps toward the realization of this have progressed rapidly. At the Annual Meeting of the Society in April, 1952, the Council and the Society in executive session voted unanimously for the erection of a new library building similar in design to that of the old Library Company. In accordance with an agreement between the Society, the Department of the Interior, and

In its study of the situation, the Society is mindful not only of the fact that the site is conveniently located across the street from Philosophical Hall, but also that Library Hall of the Old Library Company, as noted above, forms an attractive link architecturally between the Independence Square group of buildings and Carpenters' Hall (fig. 31). In order to recapture the simplicity and charm of this part of old Philadelphia, the elevation of the Library on the Fifth Street (fig. 32) side is planned to conform with the original building, while the south elevation, on Library Street (fig. 33), is to be integrated with the old Custom House, Carpenters' Hall, and other historic survivals in this part of the Independence National Historical Park. The interior, apart from the historic reading room which will repeat the main features of the old Library, is to be thoroughly up-to-date, fire and dust proof, and air conditioned, with special research facilities to emphasize Franklin's intuitive respect for the dynamic force of *ideas* and the records of civilization preserved in Libraries and archives.

⁴³Cf. Peterson, Charles E., Library Hall: home of the Library Company of Philadelphia 1790-1880, *Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 43 (1): 129-147, 1953.



FIG. 32. The American Philosophical Society's proposed Library facing Independence Square, this elevation corresponding to that of the Philadelphia Library Company's building (1790-1884). Sydney E. Martin, F.A.I.A., Architect; Schell Lewis, Del.

In view of the great State and Federal redevelopment and conservation projects now in progress in historic Philadelphia, this modified reconstruction of Franklin's old library is of much more than usual significance. During the stirring times of the Continental Congress and the Constitutional Convention, the old Library, then in Carpenters' Hall, extended its privilege to its members. With the completion of the new building in 1790, the Library became an integral part of the culture

and political life of the National Capital until its removal to the banks of the Potomac in 1800. Today imposing skyscrapers may look down on the scene from the west and south of these unobtrusive, but charming buildings associated with the great events of the country's early history, but as Carl Van Doren has said, they "... cannot overshadow their plain honorable dignity."

Libraries, it cannot be too often repeated, are not just bricks and mortar, or even just books and manuscripts. They are the custodians of ideas, and ideas are the dynamics of progress. No better illustration of this could be found than that afforded by the Declaration of Independence of which our Library has happily preserved, what might be called, three significant originals. The first, a broadside on vellum from the papers of David Rittenhouse; the second, a contemporary broadside on paper said to have been used by Colonel John Nixon as he read it on July 8, 1776, from the observatory erected by our Society in Independence Square in the summer of 1769 to observe the transit of Venus; and the third, the priceless manuscript copy of the Declaration in Jefferson's own hand indicating minor emendations by Franklin and John Adams. While the importance of the ideas of the Declaration in American history are well known, their impact on the political history of Western Europe and on the world in general is far from being appreciated. Indeed, even here in Philadelphia at the present time few realize how important a factor they



FIG. 33. South elevation of the new Library, the recessed entrance, columns, and general treatment bringing it into harmony with the Old Custom House and the other historic buildings in this area of the Independence National Historical Park. Sydney E. Martin, F.A.I.A., Architect; Schell Lewis, Del.

have been, and are, in the great civic and patriotic developments frequently referred to in this study.

Ideologies dominate the present century even more than the eighteenth. At the moment they are engaged in a portentous struggle for the international control against the unlicensed use of the atomic bomb. The millions we are spending on the Marshall Plan will be fruitless unless the liberty of the individual and freedom of peoples, scientifically integrated with equality of opportunity and social justice are associated with them. Franklin, our first and still ranking diplomat, had neither money nor guns. He represented ideas. These he disseminated as only he knew how, through the most powerful weapon of his age, the modern printing press. More dynamic and enduring than the armies of Napoleon or the subsidies of Pitt, they are alive and operating today.⁴⁴

Science and invention are multiplying the powers of production and control over nature in incredible geometric progression. Time for leisure and cultural pursuits are increasing correspondingly. A forty-hour work week and atomic energy present a challenge Franklin would be eager to meet. For him leisure meant opportunity for culture and better living:

⁴⁴ For an interesting illustration of the continuing influence of Franklin, see Pace, Antonio, Benjamin Franklin and Italy since the eighteenth century, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 94 (3): 242-250, 1950.

The first drudgery of settling new colonies, which now confines the people to mere necessities, is now pretty well over and there are many in every province in circumstances that set them at ease and afford leisure to cultivate the finer arts and improve the common stock of knowledge.

In his letter of January, 1797, accepting the presidency of the Society, Jefferson gave expression in equally prophetic language on the spread of ideas:

to see knowledge so disseminated through the mass of mankind, that it may at length reach the extremes of Society, beggars and Kings.

The wisdom of the Founders, coupled with the extraordinary faith in ideals, organized the American Philosophical Society, the oldest scientific and learned society in America, and built Philosophical Hall on Independence Square. By now erecting *Library Hall* as an immediate neighbor to *Philosophical Hall*, the American Philosophical Society will enlarge its "Home" to meet the needs of its varied and steadily expanding program "for promoting Useful Knowledge." It will add strength and distinction to its championship of the freedom and universality of science and learning at home and abroad. No more significant and, at the same time, useful tribute could be made to the Founder in commemoration of the 250th anniversary of his birth in 1706 than the restoration to Philadelphia and the nation of this unique symbol of its cultural heritage.

THE OLDEST BANK BUILDING IN THE UNITED STATES

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QUITE familiar to native Philadelphians, but perhaps less so to the generality of tourists flocking to the City of Brotherly Love, is that stately, though externally somewhat shabby, old building, still standing in lonely grandeur down at 120 South Third Street, which once housed the first Bank of the United States [D, IV]. The name "first Bank" is a little misleading, of course, and was never actually used during the period of corporate existence of the institution from 1791 to 1811. It came into vogue posthumously and historically, so to speak, to differentiate the "old" Bank of the United States from a "new" or "second" Bank of the United States which functioned under federal authority from 1816 to 1836. As a matter of fact, the Bank of North America, incorporated December 31, 1781, by the Confederation Congress on the recommendation of Superintendent of Finance Robert Morris, was the *first* true commercial bank in the United States; and, considering its national purpose, its national charter, the heavy national subscription to its initial capital stock, its services to the national treasury during 1782-1783, and its temporary national monopoly, it was also the first bank of the United States. Within a few years after it opened for business in Tench Francis's store on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia on January 7, 1782, however, the Bank of North America lost its "national" character and became a purely local bank, operating under the authority and control of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania rather than under the aegis and patronage of the United States. Moreover, two new local institutions came into existence in other cities during 1784—the Bank of New York which commenced operations without a charter on June 9, and the Massachusetts Bank, located in Boston, which was chartered in February and formally opened on July 5. In view of the trials and tribulations which all three of these pioneer banks experienced during the great depression of 1785-1786, and the resultant business and political reverberations, it is not at all surprising that the members of the Federal Convention, meeting in Philadelphia in 1787, deliberately rejected a proposal to include a specific power to charter corporations among the enumerated powers vested in Congress by the new Constitution. They prudently preferred to allow such a power to rest upon "necessary and proper" implication!

Under the brilliant and dynamic leadership of Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, a completely new national bank was created by the First Congress of the United States. Though he had able advisers, coadjutors, and lieutenants, and relied heavily on the time-tested model of the Bank of England which had operated so successfully since 1694, one cannot seriously question

Hamilton's claim to be regarded as the father of the first Bank of the United States. His illuminating and persuasive Report on a National Bank, dated December 13, 1790, formally initiated the project; he actually drafted the bill which a committee reported to the Senate on January 3, 1791; and his hand was visible in the subsequent legislative consideration of the measure as it passed both houses of Congress by substantial margins. Finally, the presidential misgivings awakened by Representative James Madison's sharp challenge to the constitutionality of a federal charter of incorporation and heightened by the adverse written opinions of Attorney General Edmund Randolph on February 12 and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson on February 15, were resolved by Hamilton's convincing exposition of the doctrine of implied powers in a voluminous, explicit, and brilliant Opinion on the Constitutionality of a National Bank, dated February 23. On February 25, 1791, President Washington signed the Act to Incorporate the Subscribers to the Bank of the United States.

By the terms of this act, the Bank of the United States was to have legal existence until March 4, 1811, during which period no other similar institution was to be established by any future law of the United States. The Bank was to have an authorized capital stock of \$10,000,000, divided into 25,000 shares of \$400 each, with the Government reserving the right to subscribe one-fifth, or \$2,000,000, to be offset, however, by an equivalent loan from the Bank repayable in ten equal annual installments. The remaining 20,000 shares were to be open for subscription by any individual, copartnership, or body politic—each share to be paid for in installments spread over a period of two years, one-fourth in specie and the remainder in approved United States securities. The Bank was to be managed by a board of twenty-five directors (American citizens) to be elected annually by the stockholders according to a regressive scale of voting, with no stockholders entitled to more than thirty votes and six directors to be ineligible for re-election each year. The Bank was authorized to establish branches anywhere within the United States and was empowered to do a general commercial banking business. Such of its circulating notes as were actually redeemable in specie should be receivable in all payments to the United States. The total property owned by the Bank—"lands, rents, tenements, hereditaments, goods, chattels, and effects of what kind, nature, or quality soever"—was not to exceed \$15,000,000 including the capital stock. The total amount of the debts which it might owe—"whether by bond, bill, note, or other contract"—was not to exceed the sum total of its deposits by more than \$10,000,000 unless previously authorized

by law. The discount rate on its loans was not to exceed six per cent per annum. Specific restrictions were stipulated to prevent the Bank from becoming a stock-, commodity-, or land-speculating corporation; and it was required to make periodical reports of its condition to the Secretary of the Treasury.

Limitations of space preclude any treatment of the actual history of the Bank of the United States during the eventful twenty years between its organization in 1791 and the lapsing of its charter in 1811. A few general observations must suffice. In his Report on a National Bank, Secretary Hamilton had stated that: "Public utility is more truly the object of public banks than private profit." The first Bank lived up to the expectations of its creator. Its relatively huge capital stock; the far-flung branch system which it developed; its close association with the Treasury as depository and fiscal agent; and the prudence, pragmatic wisdom, and rock-ribbed integrity of its directors and officers—enabled the institution to function and flourish, not merely as "an indispensable engine in the administration of the finances" as Hamilton pronounced it to be, but also as the mainspring and regulator of the whole American business world. Concepts of central banking were still in an embryonic stage of development; and the Bank of the United States, like its great prototype in England, competed with other banks in placing private loans and accepting private deposits; but some at least of its more influential directors were fully abreast, if not in advance, of their contemporaries in the Bank of England in their grasp of essential central banking principles. The profits of the Bank were moderate, considering its opportunities. Its dividends were lower than those of some of the State-chartered banks of the period; but, since they averaged over eight per cent per annum, they certainly represented a handsome return to the stockholders. Yet it is measurably true that, throughout its career, the directors of the Bank recognized the responsibilities of its position as a public agency and fairly steadily subordinated the profit-making motive to the maintenance of stability in public and private finance. "Arguments in favor of a Safe & Prudent Administration are paramount to all considerations of pecuniary Interest"—such was the keynote of the Bank's policy. In his report to the Senate, dated March 2, 1809, urging a renewal of its charter with modifications, Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin stated that: ". . . the affairs of the Bank of the United States, considered as a moneyed institution, have been wisely and skilfully managed."

Unfortunately, despite Gallatin's encomium and the essential solvency, probity, and utility of the Bank, the political ineptitude of its directors played into the hands of its inveterate enemies within the Jeffersonian Democratic-Republican party. This ineptitude, coupled with rural agrarian mistrust of a powerful urban capitalistic institution, sedulously fostered doubts as to its

constitutionality, and the relentless opposition of multiplying State banking interests resentful of the Bank's salutary regulatory influence, contributed powerfully to supply the slender margin of votes by which both houses of the Eleventh Congress refused to renew or to extend its charter in 1811.

The chief theme of the present article is not the history of the Bank itself but of the imposing building which came to house its main office in 1797. Quite naturally, the Bank had no home of its own in the very beginning. But subscriptions to the new national institution were received on July 4, 1791, in the building of its older sister, the Bank of North America on Chestnut Street. The first directors were elected at a meeting of the stockholders at the City Hall of Philadelphia on Friday, October 21, of the same year. Four days later the directors assembled, chose Thomas Willing as their president, and appointed a committee to provide "a building & apparatus." This must have been done with directorial tongues in directorial cheeks; for, as early as September 10, *The Gazette of the United States* had announced that: "Carpenter's Hall, in Chestnut Street, is engaged for the Bank of the United States"; and on October 19, *The Columbian Centinel*, published way up in Boston, had assured its readers that: ". . . the building, apparatus, vaults, &c. for conducting the *Bank*, are completed." Apparently, certain influential men had unofficially made the requisite arrangements even before the first directors were chosen! In any event, the *fait accompli* was recognized; and so it was in historic Carpenter's Hall [D, IV] that the main Bank of the United States became a going concern in December 1791. And there it remained through its fledgling period of trial-and-error development and growth during the next five and one-half years—through the financial panic which rocked the business world in the spring of 1792; through the devastating yellow fever epidemic which decimated the population of Philadelphia during the late summer and autumn of 1793; and through the mounting intensity of national party warfare, so fateful in its long-range implications for the ultimate destiny of the Bank itself. It was a well-seasoned institution, growing in power and prestige, that shifted its operations in July 1797 to a magnificent new edifice, specially erected for its accommodation on South Third Street, near the head of Dock Street.

Unfortunately, the present writer has unearthed only scanty details concerning the construction of this famous building. One may surmise that the stockholders sanctioned the project at their annual meeting in January 1794. Surviving records indicate that on February 28, 1794, the Bank paid Ann Pemberton \$13,333.33 for a lot on the west side of Third Street and that on August 24, 1796, it paid her an additional \$5,333.33 for an adjoining lot. On October 4, 1796, \$41 was paid for "drawing deed &c." An entry in the rough minutes of the board of directors for January 9, 1795, notes that:



FIG. 1. First Bank of the United States. Birch Print, 1800, first state.

"The Committee for Superintending the Building of the New Banking House [was] continued." But apparently it was not until sometime during the last quarter of 1795 that construction actually got under way.

Construction work proceeded on the basis of a design submitted by Samuel Blodget, Jr., who had been born in New Hampshire on August 28, 1757, and who had shown amazing versatility, if not sustained success, as a militia captain, business entrepreneur, amateur architect, and jack-of-all-talents. In a letter written April 8, 1792, President George Washington had quite aptly characterized him as "certainly a projecting genius." No copy of Blodget's plan has come to light; but it would appear that economy-minded directors modified it in practical execution, for, in his treatise *Economica*, printed in Washington in 1806, Blodget explains that "the brick sides are an injurious deviation." An interesting item in the directors' minutes for November 24, 1795, reveals that George Simpson, cashier of the Bank, was instructed to write to England to have the Barings order and ship "1500 sheets of Copper 48 by 24 inches, each sheet weighing 8 pounds, for the Roof of the Banking House, with a sufficient Quantity of Nails suitable for fixing the Copper upon the Roof." And we are told by Josiah Granville Leach in a book published a half-century ago that: "The marble work was under

the direction of Claudius Le Grand, a stone cutter and carver, who prepared the monumental work in his yard at Tenth and Market Streets."

It took years to complete the building. According to the balance sheets of the Bank, the total expenditures for the construction of the banking house (excluding the cost of the lots) mounted as follows:

October 2,	1795 — (nothing)
January 1,	1796 — \$30,428.00
April 1,	1796 — 36,875.23
July 1,	1796 — 43,358.11
September 30,	1796 — 53,896.00
December 30,	1796 — 62,313.00
March 31,	1797 — 68,913.33
June 30,	1797 — 76,451.33

By the middle of June 1797 sufficient progress had been made for removal plans to be formulated. The following advertisement, dated June 15, appeared in the newspapers during the next few weeks: "TO LET—The building now occupied by the *Bank of the United States*. For terms enquire of Edward Garrigues, NO. 39, Cherry Street." At last, on Monday, July 24, 1797, the great day arrived. For the first time, the Bank of the United States transacted business in the new building in South Third Street; and it was simultaneously announced that Carpenter's Hall was to be occupied by

the Land Office. Two days later *Claypoole's Advertiser* remarked, concerning the Bank:

... It is not yet finished, but it seems to advance very rapidly to completion. This may safely be pronounced the master-piece of Philadelphia, for beauty and grandeur of architecture. The front is covered entirely with elegant polished marble, decorated with superb specimens of sculpture; and a great piazza is finishing, the top of which is supported by marble pillars of immense size and height.

Nevertheless, much work remained to be done. By September 29, 1797, the cost stood at \$87,997.33 and by December 29 of the same year it aggregated \$94,042.33. On Saturday, December 23, 1797, the *Gazette of the United States* had gone into journalistic rhapsodies:

Wednesday morning the workmen at the new Bank of the United States struck their scaffolding, and unfolded the novel and enchanting scene of a truly Grecian Edifice, composed of American white marble.

The entrance to this building is by a flight of nine steps through a Portico, in its proportions nearly corresponding to the front of the celebrated Roman temple at Nismes; the Pediment is supported by six columns of the order of Corinth, with the decorations they bore at Palmyra and Rome when architecture was at its zenith in the Augustan age; ten columns in Relievo of the same order and proportions support the principal front; the tympan of the pediment is adorned with the arms of the United States; there is one door in the centre with windows in each of the interstices; all the ornaments are distinct, graceful and appropriate, but too difficult to describe minutely without the pencil's aid.

As this is the first finished building of any consequence, wherein true taste and knowledge has been displayed in this country; it is a pleasing task to inform its inhabitants, that the architect is an American, and was born in the state of Massachusetts [*sic*].

We are glad to observe that he has been careful not to encourage by his example, the innovations of those pretenders to science, who not knowing on how solid a basis the antients established their principles, have vainly imagined themselves able to make improvements; but whose futile endeavours have only produced a multiplicity of incongruous parts, awkwardly huddled together, fatiguing the eye and distracting the attention. On viewing this building, the first impression is, one plain and beautifully proportioned whole. On a more nice inspection, the eye searching for decoration, is richly gratified, finds every thing of its proper size and in its proper place, splendid with neatness, nothing deficient, but nothing crowded, sufficiently striking but not abruptly obtrusive, combining to form an elegant exhibition of simple grandeur and chaste magnificence.

It may now be justly affirmed, that agricultural and commercial pursuits are not the sole objects of America's attention; but that arts and sciences have already raised their infant heads with all the symptoms of beauty, health and vigor, that promise a strong and rich maturity. Happy land! how delightful are thy distant prospects! while the full grown empires of Europe are wasting their vigour in enervating luxuries, and exhausting each others strength by relentless wars, and all their attendant horrors, benign philosophy, sick of the desolating scene, bends her studious eye with mild complacency towards the western world, where enlightened freedom, honest independence, and smiling peace, are prepared to welcome the celestial visitant.

During the following two and a half years, further improvements brought the total cost of the building up

to \$110,168.05 by August 12, 1800. In the meantime, on December 7, 1798, the Bank paid Moses Levy \$14,667.67 "for a House & Lot on the South side of Chestnut St." This was used as the dwelling of George Simpson, the cashier. On April 5, 1800, G. Poulson was paid \$5,000 "for a Lot on the east side of Hudson's Alley" to the rear of the Bank property; and, subsequently, \$1,260.69 was expended in "building a Wall around part of the Lot on Hudson's Alley." Thus by January 1, 1803, the Bank of the United States carried its real estate in Philadelphia at \$149,803.07. The perennial threat of yellow fever in Philadelphia induced the Bank, after renting accommodations in Germantown from time to time, to purchase buildings in that suburb for its own emergency use. On March 22, 1805, it paid H. Fromberger \$7,000 for three two-story brick houses situated on the northeasterly corner of Market Place and Mill Street. This Germantown property was sold in 1813 for exactly the same sum that it had cost.

It should be observed that considerable sums were also expended for banking houses, cashiers' dwellings, and suburban yellow-fever retreats in the eight other cities where branches of the first Bank were located. The following table is taken from the records:

To Cost of Estate in Boston	\$ 58,718.82
To do of do in New York	100,861.34
To do of do in Baltimore	37,307.02
To do of do in Norfolk	35,605.78
To do of do in Washington	23,067.57
To do of do in Charleston	110,000.00
To do of do in Savannah	44,570.00
To do of do in New Orleans	39,682.20
	<hr/>
	\$449,812.73

Thus the total cost of the real estate, banking houses, and cashiers' dwellings actually used by the Bank of the United States and its branches aggregated \$634,005.68. In addition, sundry tracts of unsettled lands in various states were acquired by the Bank from time to time through conveyances by bankrupt debtors in settlement of unpaid obligations. The exact value of such property is difficult to estimate. Finally, it may be noted that between July 6, 1807, and July 1, 1810, the Bank charged off a total of \$250,000 out of undistributed profits against depreciation of banking buildings, making, however, no specific allocation of such allowances against its properties in particular cities.

Just two days before the expiration of the charter on March 4, 1811, carefully drafted deeds of trust were executed by which the stockholders formally vested control of all the property of the Bank, real and personal, in three intermediate trustees, and these gentlemen in turn conveyed the said property to eighteen former directors who agreed to serve as active trustees in liquidating the business of the institution. For over a year, although substantial progress was made in reducing loans, paying off depositors and noteholders, and accu-



FIG. 2. Stephen Girard, Merchant. Portrait by Frederick James (1885) in the Masonic Temple, Philadelphia. Courtesy of Girard College.

mulating specie, the assets of the Late Bank of the United States were held intact pending the outcome of successive attempts to secure a charter of incorporation from Pennsylvania or New York. These attempts failed. It is true that a group of New York stockholders including several trustees obtained a charter from the Albany legislature in June 1812 for a Bank of America with an authorized capital stock of \$6,000,000, of which five-sixths should nominally be subscribable in stock of the Late Bank. That particular project had never been officially sanctioned by the majority of the trustees, however, and by May 1812 they were ready to throw in the sponge and begin real liquidation. An initial liquidating dividend of seventy per cent, or \$280 on each share of \$400 par value, was declared, payable to the stockholders on June 1, 1812. Simultaneously, steps were taken to dispose of the banking houses in Philadelphia and all of the branch cities.

The present article is concerned merely with the disposition of the Philadelphia property. And here is where Stephen Girard enters the picture. This merchant prince, or "Lonely Midas," came to own 948 shares of stock in the Bank (total par value, \$379,200), largely through purchases made in England as one ex-

pedient method of transferring a vast credit balance from the books of Baring Brothers & Company to the United States. Incidentally, these shares were bought at prices ranging from £93 (\$413.33) to £100. 13s., so they were not the bargain sundry writers represent them as having been. Some time between December 1811 and May 1812, Girard made up his mind to embark upon a new business role as private banker in Philadelphia. What more grandiose gesture could he have made than to take over the premises and staff of the Late Bank of the United States? This is exactly what he proceeded to do.

Memorandum of an Agreement made this Ninth day of May 1812, between the Trustees of the late Bank of the United States on the one part, and Stephen Girard of the City of Philadelphia, merchant, of the other part.

1st. The said Trustees hereby agree to sell in fee simple to the said Stephen Girard, the Banking House lately belonging to and used by the President, Directors and Company of the Bank of the United States, the Ground belonging to it at the Sides and in the rear, and the House and lot now occupied by their Cashier, George Simpson, together with all & Singular their respective appurtenances, and the Iron Chests, Scales, Furniture and apparatus now in use the said Bank, for the Sum of One Hundred and Fifteen Thousand Dollars, payable in Six Months from the 1st day of June 1812, the said Stephen to have the liberty of deferring the said payment until the 1st day of May 1813, paying Interest from the 1st day of December 1812.

2d. The trustees are to have the use of the Directors' Room in the Said Bank, the North Side of the Banking Room, the President's Room, and the Vaults adjoining it, and one large Vault below, to be selected by them, and also such Desks and Cases as may be necessary for their Clerks, and for keeping & packing their Books and papers. These privileges to continue until the affairs of the late Bank are closed; and the necessary Cases & Boxes or Trunks to belong to the Trustees absolutely.

3d. The use of the House at present in the occupation of George Simpson, is also reserved by the said Trustees for the use of the Said Simpson, until the Said affairs are closed.

4. A conveyance in fee Simple in the usual form is to be executed by the Said Trustees or a majority of them to the Said Stephen Girard, either upon the payment of the purchase money, or at any time before, that the Said Stephen may choose, upon his giving the usual Security of Bond and Mortgage.

5. The Said Stephen Girard hereby agrees to purchase the premises above mentioned upon the terms and Conditions before Stated.

In Witness whereof the parties have Set their hands the day & year first above mentioned.

By order of the Board of Trustees

[Signed] D. Lenox Prest.

[Signed] Stephen Girard

This highly significant document vitally affected the history of the Bank building for the next forty years. Within a few days Stephen Girard duly launched his own private bank there, with George Simpson as cashier and with many other staff members of the Late Bank

of the United States in their accustomed places as his employees. All of the records of Girard's Bank commence as of May 12, 1812; and, despite initial difficulties caused by the bitter opposition of the State-chartered banks of Philadelphia, the new institution continued in active and successful operation until its owner's death on December 26, 1831. The capital stock which is said to have stood at about \$1,135,000 on June 1, 1812, was subsequently increased through the reinvestment of net profits, so that within twelve years it reached \$3,000,000. During the financial difficulties of the Second Anglo-American War, Girard's Bank rendered considerable aid to the United States Treasury.

But all through these years there was a thorn in the side of Stephen Girard—the reserved rights of the trustees of the Late Bank of the United States in the buildings which he had purchased from them. On June 9, 1812, the trustees

Resolved, That before the deeds of the Bank Estate are executed to Mr. Girard, the Counsel of the Bank be requested to prepare a lease of the reserved part, agreeably to the memorandum of agreement dated the 9th May 1812.

Horace Binney, himself one of the trustees, drafted such a lease on June 10, but Girard and his lawyer, Jared Ingersoll, took exception to its stipulations and phraseology; and on June 16 Girard, his feathers distinctly ruffled by legalistic quill-pushing and quibbling, referred to the whole transaction as "that unpleasant affair." It is true that an understanding was reached. On June 25 Girard executed the lease and received the deed in exchange; and on December 25, 1812, he duly paid the \$115,000. It has frequently been asserted that Girard got the buildings at a bargain price—that he paid "less than a third of their cost"; or "about a third of their original cost"; or even "about one-fourth of their original cost." This is a profound misconception. The total cost of the Philadelphia property of the Bank, as has been shown above, was \$149,803.07. Girard's payment, therefore, represented about 76.1 per cent of the original cost of the buildings and lots; and his use of the buildings was subject to the onerous servitude of the reserved rights. Never during his lifetime could he feel that the magnificent banking temple was exclusively dedicated to the greater glory—and profit—of Stephen Girard!

It may have been a source of some minor satisfaction to Girard that, although he was never able to evict the trustees of the *first* Bank of the United States from the building, he was at least able to deny its use as a home for the *second* Bank of the United States. It is true that he played an influential and conspicuous role in the movement for the establishment of the latter institution, finally chartered by an act of the Fourteenth Congress which President James Madison—shades of 1791!—signed on April 10, 1816. Girard became the largest subscriber to the capital stock of the second Bank and was appointed as one of the first government directors,

but he refused to give it sanctuary in his temple. Witness the following document:

The Committee appointed to enquire after a house for the temporary accommodation of the Bank—Reports that in a further Conference with Stephen Girard Esquire. There is not the least prospect of obtaining the building formerly occupied by the late Bank of the United States. The Committee will therefore pursue their enquiries and requests time for a final report.

[signed] Rob. Ralston
Chand. Price
Edw. Evans, jr.

5 Nov. 1816

Curiously enough, therefore, the second Bank of the United States in 1816, like its predecessor in 1791, established itself for a temporary sojourn in Carpenter's Hall, where it remained until its own massive marble temple was constructed a short distance away on Chestnut Street.

The long-drawn-out process of liquidating the affairs of the Late Bank of the United States covered four entire decades and terminated about twenty-one years after the death of Girard himself. It would require a whole volume satisfactorily to describe and elucidate that complex process. But the bare chronology of the story is briefly indicated in the following tabulation of successive liquidating dividends:

<i>Capital Dividends</i>	<i>Dates Payable</i>	<i>Amounts per Share</i>	<i>Percentage of Par</i>
1st	June 1, 1812	\$280.00	70.
2nd	October 1, 1812	72.00	18.
3rd	April 1, 1813	28.00	7.
4th	April 3, 1815	20.00	5.
<i>Total:</i>		<i>\$400.00</i>	<i>100%</i>

These four dividends, paid within four years and one month after the expiration of the charter, represented reimbursement of the full par value of the capital stock. In addition, however, there were subsequently paid certain extra dividends:

<i>Extra Dividends</i>	<i>Dates Payable</i>	<i>Amounts per Share</i>	<i>Percentages of Par</i>
1st	April 7, 1817	\$16.00	4.
2nd	April 24, 1820	7.00	1.75
3rd	June 16, 1823	9.00	2.25
4th	May 1, 1830	2.005
5th	September 2, 1834	2.055125
Final ..	October 4, 185270175
<i>Total:</i>		<i>\$36.75</i>	<i>9.1875%</i>

The grand total of all liquidating dividends from 1812 to 1852 was therefore \$436.75 or 109.1875 per cent on each share of a par value of \$400.

It appears that throughout the years 1812–1831, latent tension always existed between Stephen Girard and the trustees of the Late Bank. From time to time this tension would flare up in sharp clashes of interest and temperament: for example, during a controversy in November 1813 over the trustees' proposal that Girard pay interest on funds deposited by them in his bank, and

again in 1816 as a result of rivalry over the negotiation of drafts on Charleston, South Carolina. On March 4, 1816, Girard wrote most revealingly to John Stoney, his Charleston agent: ". . . the conduct of some of the Trustees of the late Bank of the U. S. indicate trifling jealousy. Although I own more Shares than the whole sett does, they think that they are entitled to preference, therefore the Plan which you have adopted will I hope put an end to those unpleasant misunderstandings." Four years later, convinced "that the Majority of that board who altogether own but a few shares are desirous to keep up the dignity," Girard instructed Stoney (March 3, 1820) to buy up as many of the available shares of the Late Bank as possible. "My object is not profit," he explained in another letter of March 20, "but to hold as many as I can so I may be able to influence the closure of that old affair." But the scheme proved abortive, and Girard was left to grind his teeth in impotent rage as the trustees clung to their "dignity" and to their reserved rights in his building.

On November 29, 1822, George Simpson died after continuous service as cashier of the first Bank and then of its trustees since 1795, as well as of Girard's Bank since 1812. Girard promoted his first teller, Joseph Roberts, to be his cashier on December 7, 1822. Roberts also succeeded to Simpson's position as cashier to the trustees, moving into the cashier's residence at 104 Chestnut Street. In 1826, however, Girard persuaded or ordered Roberts to move to a smaller and less desirable house which he had erected for him on South Third Street, adjoining the Bank; and proceeded to remodel the Chestnut Street residence for business purposes and to rent it at a profitable figure. Of this development, more must be said later.

Simpson might die and Roberts might move, but many of the trustees lived on, and they refused to move, at least in their fiduciary capacity. After all, although they collectively owned but a fraction as many shares in the late Bank as Stephen Girard who still held his 948, they collectively had eighteen lives as compared with Girard's one. Would "that old affair" never end? Finally, his patience taxed to the very limit, Girard caused Roberts to write the following letter:

To the Trustees of the
Late Bank of the U. States

Jan. 21, 1830

Mr. Girard desires me to propose to you that for the object of facilitating and bringing the trust concerns of the late Bank United States to a close—he will (after a final dividend is made by the trust) receive the funds reserved for the payment of unclaimed dividends as a deposit in his Bank and holds the same for their liquidation Six Years (or, the limit of time legally required) & when the deposit is made and the contract executed he will cause lists of the names of the owners of said Dividends to be published in the Newspapers thro' the United States and in London Paris and Amsterdam—In said lists notice also to be given that the Books & papers of the late Bank will also be preserved at his Bank for the object of proof & C during said period, at the end of which all to be destroyed and extinguished with all claims whatever and wheresoever, against

the said late Bk. of the United States, he will then pay over the balance of said deposits/if there should remain a balance/to the Pennsylvania Hospital for the charitable purposes of that Institution and for the performance of all which, he will execute an obligation on the part of his Bank.

This was an eminently sensible proposal and one which prefigured the method by which the affairs of the trust were finally to be settled twenty years later, but it was declined by the trustees—how politely or how brusquely is not a matter of record. The trustees clung to their "dignity" and another small liquidating dividend was declared, payable May 1, 1830. By some ironic twist of fate, however, it was just nine days later (May 10, 1830) that Girard purchased for a nominal \$30,100 the somewhat cloudy title of the trustees to some fabulously rich anthracite lands in Schuylkill County which the Bank had acquired from those multi-million-dollar bankrupts, Robert Morris and John Nicholson, way back in the 1790's. Complicated litigation ensued and payments to rival claimants speedily brought the total cost of the lands up to \$167,459.36. Even so, the investment had the Midas touch, for eventually these coal properties were destined to pour over a hundred million dollars of profits and royalties into the coffers of the Girard Estate, with the end of the golden stream not yet in sight.

After Girard's death on December 26, 1831, the affairs of his own private bank were efficiently settled in about five years by trustees whom he had designated in a deed of trust executed on February 9, 1826, superseding an earlier document of the same nature dated May 29, 1812. (The "Minutes of the proceedings of the Trustees of Stephen Girard's Bank" cover the period December 31, 1831, to January 14, 1837.) By Girard's will the bulk of his vast estate of over \$6,000,000 was bequeathed to "the Mayor, Alderman and Citizens of Philadelphia" for the purpose of constructing, and endowing a home and school for poor male white orphan children—the famous Girard College which finally became a going concern in 1848. Included in the bequest to the city were the buildings which Girard had acquired from the Late Bank of the United States in 1812. For some decades this vast Girard Estate was the sport and prey of municipal politicians, being successively administered by the following agencies: (1) the Committee of Councils on the Girard Fund whose minutes cover the period January 9, 1832 to October 4, 1832; (2) the Board of Directors of the Girard Trusts, whose minutes extend from November 19, 1832, to January 8, 1833; (3) the Commissioners of the Girard Estates—an agency which had a somewhat longer existence, its minutes embracing the period from January 9, 1833, to June 1, 1854; and (5) the Committee [of Councils] on the Girard Estate which functioned from July 6, 1854, to February 11, 1870. Finally, however, the Pennsylvania Legislature stepped into the picture and by act of June 30, 1869, it created an august quasi-independent agency known as the Board of Directors of City Trusts

which since February 1870 has efficiently administered the vast and ever-growing Girard Estate and sundry other less important charitable trusts of the City of Philadelphia.

But let us return to our story of the Bank building. To fill the void created by the prospective liquidation of Girard's Bank, a group of Philadelphia business men speedily projected a new state bank. As a result, a new institution known as the Girard Bank, with an authorized capital stock not to exceed \$1,500,000, was chartered by the Pennsylvania Legislature, April 3, 1832. Subscription books were opened on May 16, directors were elected on July 2, and, meeting the very next day, the directors appointed a committee "to negotiate with the trustees of the late Stephen Girard for the use of the whole or such portion of his Banking House as may be necessary for the use of this institution." The trustees had no jurisdiction but negotiations with the Committee of Councils resulted in an agreement whereby the Girard Bank engaged the old bank building for a term of three years beginning October 1, 1832, at an annual rental of \$4,000 payable quarterly. The directors met in their prospective new home for the first time on July 31 and the Girard Bank opened for business on August 23, 1832.

For a number of years the Girard Bank flourished, and, by act of the Legislature of March 19, 1836, it was authorized to increase its capital stock to \$5,000,000. After the nation-wide panics of 1837 and 1839, however, the situation of the Girard Bank, like that of the second Bank of the United States (continuing in operation under a Pennsylvania charter after 1836) steadily deteriorated—as did, for that matter, the situation of most of the other banks in the country. Early in 1842 the Girard Bank failed, reportedly with assets of only \$656,771 to offset liabilities of \$5,600,000. (This circumstance, incidentally, is wholly ignored in the pages of Josiah G. Leach's otherwise illuminating history of the institution.) For a period of several years, the Girard Bank did not occupy the old first Bank building. Its affairs were administered at an "Assignees' Office" maintained at 82 Walnut Street. Indeed, during the period of the great Kensington and Southwark Riots in Philadelphia in May and July 1844 troops were quartered at the Girard Bank. In 1846 or 1847 the temporarily defunct Girard Bank was reorganized and reopened in its former home, its capital stock being reduced from \$5,000,000 to \$1,250,000 on May 2, 1849. (A further reduction to \$1,000,000 was sanctioned by a legislative act of April 8, 1862.) From that time on, however, the Girard Bank and its successor the Girard National Bank of Philadelphia, organized in 1864, maintained continuous occupancy of the building on Third Street until 1926.

During the half century 1832–1883, the Girard Bank was not the sole tenant of the famous first Bank building. For the two decades 1832–1852 the trustees of the Late Bank of the United States continued to maintain

their office there. Stephen Girard's body lay mouldering in its grave, but his soul went marching on—still vexed, one may be sure, by "that unpleasant affair." Time and again the City Councils of Philadelphia, or the various Directors or Commissioners through which the City managed the affairs of the Girard Estate, took steps to ascertain the most speedy and effectual way to terminate the existence of the Bank Trust only to be frustrated by the obstinacy of the trustees, fortified as they were in their reserved rights of occupancy by an impregnable legal position.

The whole situation was complicated by the issue of the cashier's dwelling. Apparently the trustees of the late Bank of the United States had never officially approved of their (and Mr. Girard's) cashier's change of residence in 1826 from the original commodious dwelling at 104 Chestnut Street to the smaller house on Third Street. On December 18, 1832, about a year after Girard's death, the Board of Directors of the Girard Trusts resolved that their agent should give notice to Joseph Roberts that he would be charged \$605 per annum for his house "from the time he may be legally responsible for it." Roberts resisted the move, claiming the right to rent-free occupancy as cashier of the trustees of the Late Bank. The new Commissioners of the Girard Estates subsequently referred the subject to the City Solicitor, who in turn consulted John Sergeant. That eminent lawyer rendered an opinion sustaining Robert's claim. (See Minutes of the Commissioners, May 18, 1833.) As a result the Commissioners redoubled their efforts to have the Bank Trust closed but to no avail.

For a time in 1842–1843 it appeared as though the Bank Trust might be closed. On February 26, 1842, the surviving trustees formally petitioned the Court of Common Pleas for the City and County of Philadelphia for approval of their accounts and asked to be relieved from the obligations of their trusteeship. The accounts were duly audited and approved, but on August 6, 1842, only three of the trustees—Horace Binney, George Harrison, and John Stille—were formally discharged by the court "from the duties of Said Trust," having first surrendered the residue of the Trust Estate under their care to the three remaining trustees—Paschall Hollingsworth, Archibald McCall, and Joseph Sims. At the very close of 1842 and during the early months of 1843, Sims and McCall made overtures to the City Councils for a transfer of their assets and obligations as trustees to the City itself; but nothing came of the move, primarily because of Hollingsworth's vehement dissent and a well-founded opinion (previously formulated by Horace Binney) to the effect that the City of Philadelphia was not legally authorized to act in such a capacity. On April 13, 1843, Archibald McCall died leaving only the senile Joseph Sims and the psychopathic Paschall Hollingsworth "to keep up the dignity" of the trusteeship. There is documentary proof, however, of the fact that these two trustees and their faithful old associate, Joseph

Roberts, were meticulously conscientiously, and honorably administering the trust fund. Incidentally, it was in this very year 1843 that a certain James Ashmead made an abortive attempt to force an escheat of the assets of the Trust to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Beginning in April 1843 a new angle developed. Joseph Roberts, grown wealthy, advancing in years, and surrounded by a large family, felt cramped in his cashier's house on Third Street. He owned several farms and town houses, but, with the support of the two Bank trustees, he thriftily sought to negotiate with the Girard Estate "for some other accommodation to be agreed upon" (Minutes of the Commissioners, April 20, 1843), or else for a commutation of his occupancy rights in the shape of an annual payment of \$550 or \$600 (Minutes, September 7, 1843). The Commissioners voted down a resolution to pay \$500 (Minutes, November 2, 1843). Roberts renewed his overtures from time to time without result (Minutes, May 16, 1844). It should be remembered that, in addition to this annoying controversy over the cashier's dwelling, the Girard Estate was injured by the fact that the rental value of the Bank building itself was seriously impaired by the reserved rights of the trustees (*cf.* Minutes, December 17, 1845, January 7 and April 25, 1846, and March 4 and June 10, 1847).

The situation came to a head in 1847. On August 2 Roberts vacated the house on Third Street. On August 7 the two trustees of the Late Bank resolved to support his demand for occupancy of his former dwelling on Chestnut Street—currently leased by Charles Oakford as tenant of the Girard Estate. The Commissioners refused to accede (Minutes, August 19 and September 10, 1847). Whereupon the trustees resolutely commenced an action in ejectment against Oakford in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania at *nisi prius* (*Joseph Sims and Paschall Hollingsworth v. Charles Oakford*—December Term 1847, No. 41). The City of Philadelphia stepped in to defend the suit, but although the litigation dragged itself out on appeal to the Supreme Court *in banc* until March 1, 1851, the trustees of the Bank won a sweeping victory on all points involved. After some further haggling the Commissioners of the Girard Estates were eventually obliged to effect an agreement with the trustees of the Bank, by which they were to pay the trustees a lump sum of \$5,038.59 in lieu of the net mesne profits of the building at 104 Chestnut Street from August 2, 1847, to February 2, 1851, and also to pay \$700 commutation per annum thereafter for such period as the cashier of the trustees might legally be entitled to possession of the said house (*cf.* Minutes, March 6, March 14, March 19, March 25, April 2, and April 17, 1851).

In April 1850, while the *Sims v. Oakford* case was still pending, Charles Gilpin, President of the Select Council, later Mayor of Philadelphia, rushed off to Harrisburg, and expertly lobbied the obscure acts of April 6 and April 22, 1850, through the legislature, designed to expe-

dite, if not to force, a final closure of the Bank Trust. Gilpin was definitely supported and financed in this activity by the Commissioners of the Girard Estates (Minutes, April 18 and May 2, 1850.) Hollingsworth, who had been spending much of his time in New York in recent years, also rushed over to Harrisburg and launched a frenetic counterlobbying campaign, but without success. In the middle of June, 1850, the trustees, on advice of counsel, acquiesced in the requirements of the legislative act of April 22, 1850, by publishing a long list of unclaimed dividends in the newspapers of eight American and three European cities. This was exactly what Stephen Girard had proposed to do twenty years earlier.

To prevent further interference by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in the affairs of their beloved Trust, however, the trustees arranged the institution in the United States Circuit Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania of an action in equity against themselves, designed to have their Trust terminated under Federal judicial auspices (*Morewood et al. v. Sims et al.*, in Equity, April Term 1850—No. 103). On October 5, 1850, Thomas Dunlap, Nicholas Biddle's unfortunate successor as president of the once mighty Bank of the United States of Pennsylvania, was appointed Master in Chancery to settle the accounts of the trustees and to recommend a final distribution of the Trust Fund. His report was made April 20, 1852. Various technicalities supervened, occasioned by the death of Paschall Hollingsworth, the last surviving trustee, on May 17, 1852—which fact, when judicially ascertained on July 16, necessitated the vacating of an unwitting final decree pronounced on June 7 and the filing of a Bill of Revivor against Emily Hollingsworth as Administratrix. So it was not until October 4, 1852, that Judge John K. Kane rendered his true final decree, terminating the Trust, ordering the payment of a final liquidating dividend of seventy cents per share, and appointing Dunlap as Receiver to take charge of the few hundred dollars of remaining funds and of the books and papers of the Trust. There is every reason to believe that, if Hollingsworth had lived, he would have insisted on an appeal of the decree to the Supreme Court of the United States!

The Girard Estate benefited in three ways from the final closure of the Trust of the first Bank of the United States: (1) It received a final dividend of \$663.40 on Stephen Girard's 948 shares of stock; (2) it was released from any further obligation to pay the \$700 annual commutation of the rental value of the cashier's dwelling; and (3) it came at long last into full possession and control of the Bank building.

The story of that building for the next century (1852–1952) must be condensed into a few paragraphs. Since the Girard Bank was not disposed to pay an increased rental for the full building, steps were taken to repair and remodel the interior for multiple occupancy. For about three decades, before the construction of the pres-

ent City Hall, substantial portions of the Girard Bank Building were occupied by various agencies of the City Government—especially the Treasury Department and the Controller's Department.

By the close of the nineteenth century the Girard Bank was in full possession and occupancy and was embarking upon a career of expansion. In response to its importunities a careful renovation of the exterior of the building was undertaken; and the interior was completely remodeled and "rebuilt in the most modern manner, both from sanitary and fire-proof points of view." The most startling change was this:

The low-ceiled apartments in which the first United States Bank started business have been replaced by a banking-room, eighty-six feet three inches wide and sixty-seven feet deep, lighted by a glass dome thirty-five feet in diameter

and forty-four feet from the floor to the apex, flooding the entire apartment with daylight. This unique feature of the interior is supported by eight Corinthian columns in the first story, which are surmounted by a similar colonnade of forty columns and an entablature from which springs the glass dome. (Excerpts from architect James H. Windrim's memorandum—printed in Leach, Josiah Granville, *The History of the Girard National Bank of Philadelphia, 1832-1902*, 71-72, Phila., 1902.)

The Girard National Bank continued to occupy the renovated edifice until 1926, vacating it only after its merger with the Philadelphia National Bank. The building remained vacant from 1926 through December 1929, but was then leased to the American Legion from January 1930 until June 1944. Since August 1, 1945, it has served most fittingly as the principal office of the Board of Directors of City Trusts. Long may it stand!

THE SECOND BANK OF THE UNITED STATES

BRAY HAMMOND

FOR the Greek temple on lower Chestnut Street [C, IV] still to be called the Old Custom House scarcely does justice to historic fact. In the days of its fame, and of Nicholas Biddle's, it was the home of the Bank of the United States—the second of that name—whose “destruction” as a federal establishment was considered by Andrew Jackson to be one of his greatest achievements. It was designed for the Bank by William Strickland and is not merely one of the finest and most influential examples of Greek revival architecture in the United States but one of the noblest buildings in the country of any style. The corner stone was laid in

of the United States and was housed in the building erected by the latter on Third Street [D, IV]. Organization of the new Bank of the United States was largely effected in Mr. Girard's banking offices. The new Bank opened in Carpenters' Hall [D, IV], 7 January 1817, and continued there till about 1821, when it moved into other temporary quarters out on Chestnut Street. Meanwhile, in 1818, the directors had decided it should have a home of its own. In announcing their purpose, 12 May 1818, and inviting designs for the new edifice, they said they desired it to be “a chaste imitation of Grecian architecture, in its simplest and least expensive



FIG. 1. The Second Bank of the United States, later the Old Custom House. J. Tingle after W. H. Bartlett. Courtesy of the Carl Schurz Memorial Foundation.

1819, when Langdon Cheves of South Carolina was the Bank's president, and the building was completed in 1824 during the presidency of his successor, Nicholas Biddle of Philadelphia.

The Bank had been incorporated in 1816, to restore the services rendered by the old Bank of the United States, whose charter, enacted in 1791 at the instance of Alexander Hamilton, had been allowed to expire in 1811. The new Bank like the old was government depository and regulator of the currency, and the government as before was its largest stockholder. The second largest was Stephen Girard, who was already sole owner and proprietor of his own bank, an unincorporated concern which continued the local business of the old Bank

form.” The competition was won by the young Philadelphia architect, William Strickland.

The same party and pretty much the same business and political leaders responsible for discontinuance of the old Bank were responsible for establishment of the new one. For the closing of the old Bank had been followed, as expected, by an enthusiastic increase throughout the country in the number of local banks and in the volume of bank loans, the over-expanded structure of credit had collapsed under pressure of the British invasion and occupation of Washington in 1814, most banks had suspended specie payments, and the same people who let the old Bank die had the task of setting up the new one in order to restore the currency and rehabilitate

the government finances. Yet notwithstanding the initial success of the Bank in helping to accomplish these purposes, the period during which its classic home was building abounded in difficulties that were almost fatal to it. Under its first president, William Jones, it had been mismanaged and robbed. Under its second president, Langdon Cheves, the grim task of restoring its solvency had been achieved, and its legality had been upheld in the Supreme Court against the attack of individual states which sought to drive its branch offices from their territory if not to annihilate it entirely. But these victories were dearly won. The Bank's debtors did not forgive its costly collection of what was due it, and the states resented its freedom from their measures—though Chief Justice Marshall's opinion in the case, *McCulloch v. Maryland*, 1819, stood nevertheless as a crucial and lasting affirmation of federal powers under the Constitution.

The Bank had also had internal conflicts arising in part from the hungry stockholders' dissatisfaction with Langdon Cheves' unwillingness to resume payment of dividends prematurely and in part from basic differences between him and Nicholas Biddle respecting the Bank's use of its powers of note issue, which Mr. Cheves thought should be contracted and which Mr. Biddle thought should be expanded. These differences—and in Mr. Cheves' opinion the circumstance that he was not a Philadelphian—led to his replacement by Nicholas Biddle, early in whose presidency the Bank moved into its new edifice. The new president was the scion of one of Philadelphia's most prominent families and a man of distinction in literary studies and public affairs. He had already been appointed a government director of the Bank by President James Monroe in 1819, and he had probably a better understanding of the Bank's potential usefulness in the economy than any of his contemporaries. But he had had little or no practical business or administrative experience when at the age of thirty-six he became head of the Bank, the largest corporation in the country, by far, if not in the world.

The design of the new building, according to William Strickland's own account, was Grecian Doric, the eight fluted columns of each portico—one facing Chestnut Street and the other facing Library—being derived from those of the Parthenon. In the interior there was considerable late Georgian. The banking room is forty-eight feet by eighty-one, with a row of six Ionic columns on either side supporting a barrel-vaulted ceiling. The space behind these columns was occupied by clerks' desks, and across each end were tellers' counters.

The banking room is amply warmed by two cast-iron furnaces, lined with fire-brick, being simply erected within an airchamber through which the external atmosphere passes and becomes heated by the furnace. It then rises through the arch into a circular cast-iron pedestal, perforated on the sides, out of which it is suffered to escape into the room.



FIG. 2. Banking room. From A. A. Gilchrist, *William Strickland, Architect and Engineer 1788-1854*, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950.

There were also four fire places beneath the windows behind the tellers' counters.¹

On the same floor, at the Library Street end was a large room for stockholders' meetings, which were held triennially; the president's office adjoined the northwest corner of the banking room, and at the front the loan office and transfer office were on either side of the Chestnut Street entrance. In the loan office, presumably, applications for loans were left for submission to the directors, lending at that time being a more formal procedure than it later became, and in the transfer office, certificates of stock in the Bank were transferred. The Bank's stock, aside from government bonds was the principal medium of the day for investment, and transfers were active. It seems likely that subscriptions, deliveries, redemptions, and exchanges of government bonds also were effected in this room, which in consequence of these various investment transactions may well have been one of the city's busiest financial spots.

On the floor above were "the directors', engravers', and copperplate printers' rooms," reached by "the private stairway" from the side of the banking room next the president's office and probably not otherwise accessible. In these rooms, the directors decided what loans were to be made and the Bank's notes, which supplied a currency of nation wide use, were engraved and printed—operations that required to be safeguarded even more than the Bank's stock of precious metals. The vaults lay in the basement, opening to alley ways on both sides of the Bank, in and out of which the larger movements of the Bank's specie passed. These operations were probably not quiet ones, for Nicholas Biddle, whose office was overhead, once wrote that the music of spheres could not thrill through the soul "like kegs of new dollars as inward they roll."

¹ Gilchrist, Agnes A., *William Strickland*, 55-57, Phila., Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1950.

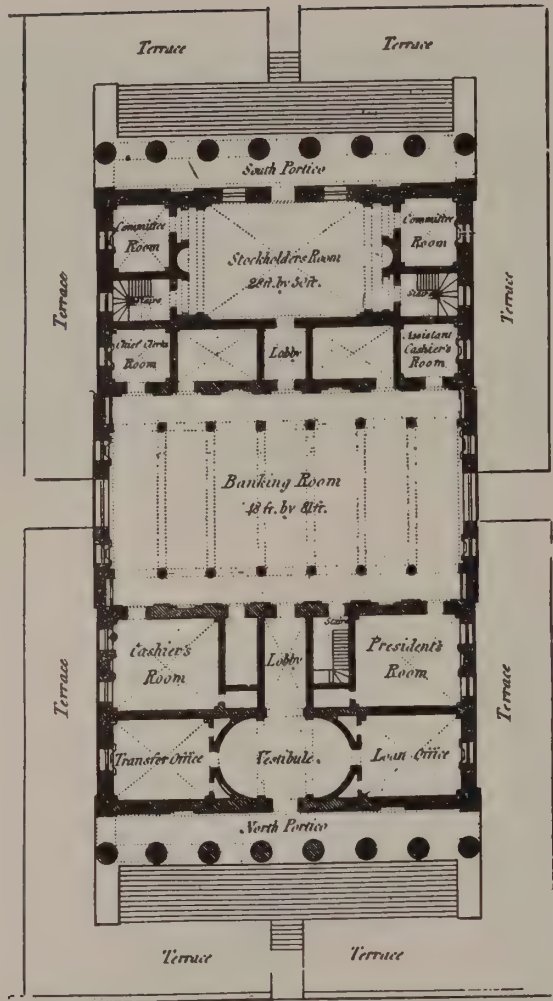


FIG. 3. Floor plan. From A. A. Gilchrist, *William Strickland, Architect and Engineer, 1788-1854*, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950.

In 1824 the Bank had a system of seventeen branch offices in as many cities extending from Portsmouth and Pittsburgh in the north to Savannah and New Orleans in the south; by 1831 the number had increased to its maximum, twenty-four. The management of the branches was one of the Bank's greatest difficulties, for they lay at such distances, in a period when there was neither railway nor telegraph, that quick communication was impossible. Moreover, although the funds of the Bank were welcomed in the cities where the branch offices were situated, there was active jealousy of control by Philadelphia. Each branch city aspired to independence and in the end achieved it, the branches, one way or another, becoming eventually local banks upon expiry of the charter in 1836. A large number of the branch buildings like that of the mother Bank on Chestnut Street were of Grecian design and contributed to the spread of Greek revival architecture throughout the country. Thus in Louisville, Kentucky, the branch office of the Bank, completed in 1832, followed, according

to contemporary local accounts, the proportions of the portico of the temple of Bacchus in Teos. Other banks followed a like style; the Bank of Indiana with branch offices in all the leading towns of the state presented everywhere the same Corinthian front. And if not Greek, the choice still was classic, as seen in the façade of the Wall Street office of the Bank of the United States, which, removed from its original structure and site, is today a façade of the American Wing of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.²

The ancient temples were repositories of wealth and sources of credit, but it was not this circumstance that inspired American banks to house themselves in classic forms. Rather it was compliance with the tendency of a new and ambitious country, such as the United States, to "improve" itself. Most Americans did not find their ideals in the wilderness—though they did find opportunity there—but sought first and most of all to replace the wilderness with the comforts and amenities of civilization. The native Indian nomenclature, for example, could not be abandoned, but place names carrying memories of the old world and of ancient culture were the fashion. The superabundance of the primitive all around made the Americans aspire for the sophisticated and the correct; and there was nothing more correct than the Greek. Moreover there was a general conviction, as there had been in France, that revolution had restored such political freedom as had been cherished by the Greeks but later overwhelmed by intervening ages of feudalistic oppression. In particular, interest in Greek art had been revived by the work of the British archeologists, Stuart and Revett, whose drawings were the authority for Strickland's design of the United States Bank. Thomas Jefferson had been familiarizing Americans with classic design for a generation, and in Philadelphia itself it had been exemplified already by Samuel Blodget in the old Bank of the United States and still more handsomely by Benjamin Latrobe in the Bank of Pennsylvania, a structure that no longer stands. Contemporary appreciation of William Strickland's achievement in the Bank of the United States seems to have been faithfully represented in the following entry by Philip Hone of New York in his diary, 14 February 1838:

The portico of this glorious edifice, the sight of which always repays me for coming to Philadelphia, appeared more beautiful to me this evening than usual, from the effect of the gas-light. Each of the fluted columns had a jet of light from the inner side so placed as not to be seen from the street but casting a strong light upon the front of the building, the softness of which, with its flickering from the wind, produced an effect strikingly beautiful. How strange it is that in all the inventions of modern times architecture alone seems to admit of no improvement—every departure

² Hamlin, Talbot, *Greek revival architecture in America*, 194, N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1944.

from the classical models of antiquity in this science is a departure from grace and beauty.³

Though Nicholas Biddle was not a director of the United States Bank when William Strickland's plans for it were adopted, he had already been influential in the Greek revival; for as a very young man, stirred by classic enthusiasms, he had been the first cultivated American to visit contemporary Greece, whence the knowledge and interest he brought back to Philadelphia very sensibly impressed public taste. The home he built, "Andalusia," if not the best Greek, was certainly impressive; but his influence, heightened by his prestige as president of the Bank, was directly exercised later in Thomas Walters' designs for Girard College and for the completion of the Treasury building in Washington.

The most successful period of the Bank's career was the brief one between 1823, when Nicholas Biddle became its president, and 1832 when Andrew Jackson's attack upon it became fully developed. Mr. Biddle was a man of brilliant and diverse accomplishments and in these years, in the operations of the United States Bank, he carried the art of central banking further than it had so far been developed even by the Bank of England. Under him, the Bank of the United States consciously extended and exercised functions and responsibilities which the Bank of England was only reluctantly undertaking. It held that position in the economy held today by the latter, by the Bank of Canada, and in the United States by the twelve Federal Reserve Banks. It was becoming the sole Bank of issue, its notes tending gradually to replace those of the local banks and to provide the country with a single and uniform circulating medium. Its operations in domestic and foreign exchange cheapened and improved the means of financing both domestic and foreign trade. Most consequential of all, its being the federal government's depository made it the "central bank" or nation wide regulator of bank credit. The revenue of the federal government, which then consisted mainly of taxes on imports, was received by the federal collectors and by them deposited in the Bank of the United States. The revenue was paid to the collectors mainly in the circulating notes of the local banks, and the United States Bank, when it received the notes, called on the local banks to redeem them. There were also notes of the United States Bank in circulation, but since their volume was less than that of the state banks' notes, the latter always had balances due the United States Bank which they were supposed to discharge in silver and gold. This loss of silver and gold meant a reduction of their reserves and of their ability to lend.

So long as the United States Bank was in operation, its continuing demand upon the state banks for redemption of their notes in specie was a powerful and automatic restraint upon their lending power. By furnishing its own notes, which circulated at a uniform value



FIG. 4. Nicholas Biddle. From an engraving by Samuel Cousins after the portrait by Thomas Sully. Courtesy of Mrs. Owen J. Roberts.

throughout the country, and by constantly holding the loans of the state banks in check, the Bank provided as uniform and satisfactory a monetary system as any country in the world possessed, and better than most, especially with the vast territorial extent of the United States taken into account. But the success of the Bank was not popularly understood or appreciated. Corporations, as artificial persons, differ importantly from natural persons in being unable to arouse much popular affection though their ability to arouse hatred is without limit. Banks in this respect are among the least fortunate of corporations, and the Bank of the United States, because of its unmatched size, its federal origin, and the ceaseless assaults of its enemies, was the least fortunate of banks.

First of all, it inherited the traditional aversion of agrarians, who had always had a distaste for business and distrusted corporate banking especially. Theirs was a stubborn though latent source of opposition. An opposition more active and potent came from the state banks and their customers, who in a new and growing economy where the thirst for bank credit was insatiate, found the restraints of the Bank of the United States intolerable. The conservatively managed banks felt the restraint of the central bank relatively little themselves; they valued its salutary influence upon their more expansive competitors and upon the banking system gen-

³ Hone, Philip, *Diary of Philip Hone*, 302, N. Y., Dodd, Meade & Co., 1927.

erally. But the conservatively managed banks were a minority. Most banks were irked by the demand for redemption of their notes and cried out against their oppression by the monster in Philadelphia. Their outcries found abundant sympathy amongst the politicians and governmental authorities of the individual states, whose control of the local banks was largely frustrated by the United States Bank and who could nowise tax or control the latter. The states and the state banks together were almost uniformly hostile to the federal Bank, therefore.

Beside these general grounds of hostility, however, there were two special factors of peculiar importance. The first of these was the resentment felt against the Bank by the newer and more enterprising part of the business world whose fortunes were still in process of being made and who associated the Bank with the conservative and established part of it—the so-called “capitalists” and aristocrats of inherited wealth. The latter group had money, social position, and the complaisance that goes with them; the former was struggling to obtain the same things and smarted meanwhile under financial and social disadvantages that they felt the Bank, as an institution in which Philadelphia’s monied aristocracy had immoderate influence, served most offensively to aggravate. Roger B. Taney of Baltimore, later Chief Justice, persuasively explained to President Jackson that the Bank of the United States in Philadelphia was owned by capitalists, whereas the stockholders in the state banks were men of moderate means like himself—and he, it happened, was director of a Baltimore bank which was later one of the pet banks to which, as Secretary of the Treasury, he transferred public deposits from the federal Bank in Philadelphia. David Henshaw, a Boston business man and Jacksonian Democrat, whose proposals for a new big bank to replace the one in Philadelphia gave support to Andrew Jackson’s veto of the latter’s charter, sedulously distinguished his self-made wealth from that of “capitalists” and “aristocrats,” whom he volubly hated.

The second special factor in the attack on the United States Bank was the rise of New York as a financial center and its jealousy of Philadelphia’s continuing power. The Erie Canal had given New York commercial primacy, but financial primacy remained with the Bank of the United States in Philadelphia. And the federal revenues collected in New York, which were of greater volume than in all other American cities combined, were not deposited in New York banks but in the New York branch of the Bank in Philadelphia, where, formally at least, they were controlled by Philadelphia financiers. Nowhere were politicians, bankers, and other business men more efficient in promoting local and regional economic interests than in New York under Martin Van Buren and the so-called Albany Regency, who were scarcely less powerful behind the agrarian front of the Jackson administration. To these Wall

Street Jacksonians the continuance of Chestnut Street’s primacy in money matters was unbrookable.

All these factors found full play under Andrew Jackson. He was himself reared in the agrarian tradition and shared its hatred of all banks. His advisers were largely self-made men of the newer sort, born themselves on farms but drawn by the industrial revolution into business enterprise or professional association with it; and as they progressed in the business world, the agrarian vocabulary which they had learned in boyhood came to express the substance of *laissez faire*. To them the United States Bank in Philadelphia was everyway offensive. It made borrowing difficult, it choked enterprise, it operated in the individual states independent of local control, it held back the advancement of New York and other centers, it represented an aristocracy of accumulated capital, and it had no heart for the democratization of business. It was monopolistic and oppressive. Andrew Jackson was not loathe to believe this. Eager on principle to attack the Bank, he was happy in the encouragement and support which came not only from his agrarian friends but more aggressively from the business world itself and particularly from New York, which had done so much for him politically. As assurance came from him that the monster which oppressed them would be destroyed, his followers organized new banks and projected still more—amongst them some, in New York and Boston, to be as big as the Bank of the United States or even bigger and to have the federal deposits which the Bank in Philadelphia was to lose.

In defense of the Bank, Nicholas Biddle exerted the utmost energy and intelligence, but not enough discretion. His basic difficulty was that he himself personified the very qualities that roused resentment and animosity in the business democracy. Even his virtues were aristocratic. He was elegant, rich, accomplished, self-sufficient, and more inclined to give advice than to take it. The more he did in defense of the Bank, the more he strengthened the attack upon it. The war over its continuance was one of the most dramatic and passionate episodes in American history, but its political aspects have obscured its economic and social significance, which was that of *laissez faire* and the industrial revolution triumphing over economic conservatism and governmental controls. Though the phraseology of the attack on the Bank was agrarian—as was Andrew Jackson himself—its substance was entrepreneurial; and the triumph, whose spirit was expressed in the Jacksonian motto—“The world is governed too much”—put free enterprise in the saddle and gave the nineteenth century in America its dominant economic character.

Renewal of the Bank’s federal charter being prevented by President Jackson, Nicholas Biddle obtained a Pennsylvania charter, but being no longer government depository, the Bank was no longer regulator of the currency, or central bank. Its energies and powers were diverted from restraint upon enterprise to stimulation of

it. Mr. Biddle, brilliant but wanting in business experience and astuteness, and uncritically sanguine about the future of America, allowed the Bank's funds to be employed in almost anything that looked grandiose. He took to empire building. He promoted railways, mines, canals, factories, sericulture, and the annexation of Texas. His imagination and optimism greatly exceeded his common sense. After his retirement in 1829, his successors tried to break the banks of New York and bring monied primacy back to Chestnut Street.⁴ The attempt accorded with the business morals of the time—the Bank already having had to defend itself from like attack—but it failed. And so did the Bank. It struggled to regain confidence, but in 1841 it gave up and closed for good. Having been acclaimed for the Bank's success, Nicholas Biddle was now blamed for its failure. He was indicted on charges of criminal conspiracy to defraud the Bank, and, though the charges were dismissed, the popular view was that the Bank had simply been looted. This is a gross over-simplification of the matter that deprives the episode of significance. What is striking is the extent to which intelligence, inadequately disciplined by experience, could be led by passion, self-assurance, and enthusiasm into infatuate errors of judgment. The same thing has often happened, but seldom has it engaged characters so intrinsically interesting, in so dramatic a fashion, and on so great a scale.⁵

⁴ Hammond, Bray, The Chestnut Street raid on Wall Street, 1839, *Quart. Jour. Economics* 61: 605-618, 1947.

⁵ In addition to the works already cited, the following are relevant: Catterall, Ralph C. H., *The Second Bank of the United States*, Chicago, Univ. of Chicago Press, 1903; Hammond, Bray,

In the liquidation of the Bank, the building constructed for it by William Strickland "in chaste imitation of Grecian architecture," was acquired by the federal government and became the Custom House, which it was for so long—from 1845 to 1935—that its origin as Bank of the United States was generally forgotten. Yet its significant and memorable associations as an artistic and historical monument lie far less with the century-long routine of customs collections than with the earlier cultural growth of America, the height of Philadelphia's financial primacy, and the rise and democratization of business enterprise which were characteristic of the Jacksonian revolution. Restraint, however, which was the spirit of the Bank's architecture and the original purpose of its operations, was not congenial to the rugged individualism of business enterprise in nineteenth-century America. The latter expressed itself rather in those stout and assertive façades, dating from later in the century, which frown heavily down on Chestnut Street in the Bank's near neighborhood. These express a spirit which had a long and hearty predominance in American life. But it is pleasing that in the civil grace of Independence Hall and the serene self-possession of the United States Bank, old Philadelphia can so compactly exhibit other achievements in the American past that have quite as much substance as those later monstrosities but to current taste remain admirable as well.

Jackson, Biddle, and the Bank of the United States, *Jour. of Econ. Hist.*, 7: 1-23, 1947; Kimball, Fiske. The Bank of the United States, 1818-1824, *Architectural Record* 58: 581 ff., 1925. Redlich, Fritz, *The moulding of American banking*, N. Y., Hafner Publ. Co., 1947.

THE PHILADELPHIA EXCHANGE: WILLIAM STRICKLAND, ARCHITECT

AGNES ADDISON GILCHRIST *

By 1831, when it was decided to build an Exchange building in Philadelphia, the pattern of American civilization, as we know it today, was already being established. The colonial period was over, not only politically, as it had been for fifty years, but also spiritually. A new generation had grown up which recognized the potential power of the United States. Andrew Jackson was President; the spoils system was initiated; the west was being opened up as fast as roads, canals and, by the end of the decade, railroads could be built. Emigrants were coming in ever larger numbers. New industries were being started. Boom years were coming with extension of credit and an over-supply of paper money only to be briefly stopped by the depression of 1837.

literary reputation—in its site, the beautiful regularity of its streets—its buildings both public and private—in every particular, except in the dust and dirt, the noise and bustle, which attends an extensive shipping, we are superior, without a doubt to every other City in the Union.¹

There were Philadelphians then as now who regretted the demolition of historic landmarks. *The Philadelphia Album* on July 16, 1831 lamented the destroying of the old building at 43 Market Street where Benjamin Franklin had his post office and bookstore. Then as now, the newspapers recorded the growth of Russian power and applauded her enemies, at that time the Poles, for whom, owing to Kosciuszko, the Philadelphians felt a special sympathy.²



FIG. 1. Early photograph of the Philadelphia Exchange. Historical Society of Pennsylvania. From A. A. Gilchrist, *William Strickland*, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950.

Philadelphia participated in the national growth and prosperity. A newspaper article which appeared on May 14, 1831, stated that it was estimated that 1,600 new buildings would be erected in the city during the summer and it continued:

Philadelphia is truly the Athens of America: in its public institutions, in its benevolent and charitable societies, in its

* Fiske Kimball, Director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art; Edward Riley, Chief Historian and Charles E. Peterson, Resident Architect of the Independence National Historical Park Project, have permitted me to use their notes, which help I wish to acknowledge with thanks and have indicated in the footnotes.

THE NEED FOR AN EXCHANGE

Since Philadelphia was a busy port and there was great local pride, it is not surprising that a group of financiers and merchants organized themselves into a society for the building of an Exchange. In the middle of the eighteenth century there had been a bequest for the building of an Exchange but it had never been car-

¹ *The Philadelphia Album*, 156, Sat., May 14, 1831.

² *Ibid.*, May 21, 1831, "The Poles Have Gained a Complete and Signal Victory over Their Russian Adversaries." Kosciuszko was in Philadelphia during the Revolution and again from December 1796 through 1798.

ried out.³ Charleston⁴ had an Exchange building in 1761, built by the Horlbeck brothers for the cost of £44,016 16s 8d and which with changes is still standing. New Orleans had Exchange buildings, although its Merchants Exchange which also included the Post Office was not built until 1835–36 with James Dakin as architect.⁵ The Baltimore Exchange designed by Benjamin Henry Latrobe and Maximilian Godefroy was opened in 1820.⁶ Town and Davis designed the New York Exchange in 1825–27, which burned in 1835.⁷ Boston's Exchange, designed by Isaiah Rogers, was not completed until 1842.⁸

The purpose of an Exchange building is to provide a meeting place for merchants to barter or sell their cargoes and merchandise. Venice was content with the Rialto, the covered bridge over the Grand Canal. The first Exchange building in Europe was in Antwerp built in 1531. Thomas Gresham who knew the Antwerp Exchange well, offered to build one in London, which he financed by the rents from shops on the second floor. It was formally opened by Queen Elizabeth in 1571. It burned in the Great Fire and was replaced by the Royal Exchange by Edward Jerman of 1668 which in turn was burned in 1838 to be replaced by the present Exchange by Tite.⁹ In the eighteenth century an Exchange was built in Edinburgh, but the guidebooks of the period comment that the merchants continued to do their business on the street corner as formerly.¹⁰ Thomas Cooley in 1769 won the competition for the Exchange in Dublin for which sixty-four architects submitted plans. It is now the city hall.¹¹ The Exchange in Copenhagen with its fascinating tower of twisted tails was opened in 1619.¹² By the end of the eighteenth century most commercially important cities had an Exchange.

The Philadelphians who were Trustees of the Philadelphia Exchange in 1831 were Stephen Girard, Robert Ralston, Joseph P. Norris, James C. Fisher, and Joshua Longstreth.¹³

³ *Souvenir history of the Philadelphia Stock Exchange*, 1903. In May 1754, James Hamilton, retiring Mayor offered the city £150 to build an Exchange (Peterson).

⁴ Ravenel, Beatrice St. Julien, *Architects of Charleston*, 39–43, Charleston, Carolina Art Assn., 1945.

⁵ *Norman's New Orleans and environs: 1845*, 157–161.

⁶ *The stranger's guide to Baltimore*, 32, 1852.

⁷ *The Family Magazine*, 402, New York, Feb. 1836.

⁸ Kilham, Walter H. *Boston after Bulfinch*, 36, Cambridge, Harvard Univ. Press, 1946.

⁹ Wilson, Effingham, *Description of the New Royal Exchange*, London, 1844.

¹⁰ *Views of Edinburgh*, 1787.

¹¹ *The life of James Gandon, Esq.*, ed. by Thom. J. Mulvay, Dublin, 1846.

¹² Portfolio on Exchanges, Art Division, New York Public Library.

¹³ Scharf, J. T., and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* 1: 634–635, Phila., Everts, 1884.

THE SITE

Their first problem was to determine upon an appropriate site. The block chosen was bounded by Dock, so named because formerly there was a creek which came up there where small vessels unloaded fire wood at the dock, Walnut and Third Streets.¹⁴ It was well placed, not far from the banks and most convenient to Stephen Girard's own bank building on Third and not too distant from the water front [D, IV].

The hundredth anniversary of the birth of George Washington was chosen as the day for the laying of the corner stone. There was a ceremony at 12 noon when the large block was placed twenty feet below the surface of the ground. It had carved on it the following inscription:

February 22d. Anno Domini 1832

Building Committee Joshua Lippincott
Ashbel G. Ralston
John Sites
Elwood Morris—Clerk of Works
John K. Kane—Solicitor
William Strickland—Architect
John Struthers—Marble Mason
John O'Neill—Carpenter
Joseph S. Walter & Son—Bricklayers
David Henderson—Marble Quarrier
Leiper & Crosby—Stone Quarriers

Poulson's American Daily Advertiser reported that

When the masons had completed their work, the following neat and happy address was delivered by Mr. John K. Kane, to a numerous and respectable audience.—Fellow Citizens.—The edifice, whose deep and secure foundation we have assembled to witness, is dedicated to the uses of a commercial Exchange for the city of Philadelphia. Accustomed as we are to the rapid and silent advance of every thing about us, from the simplicity which characterizes a new settlement, to the refinements of splendour and of wealth, it has been a subject of frequent surprise that the commencement of such a structure should have been delayed so long. Yet there are even now those living amongst us, who perhaps may remember when the site which it is to occupy was the shore of a sluggish and winding stream.

Later in his address, Kane projected his thought forward 150 years into the future, to 1982, "when the building which we have founded shall stand among the relics of antiquities, another memorial to posterity of the skill of its architect,—and proof of the liberal spirit, and cultivated taste, which, in our days, distinguish the mercantile community."¹⁵

On March 8, 1832, the Board of managers of the Exchange addressed a Memorial to City Councils regarding Footways surrounding the Exchange and petitioned that the grade from Third to Dock be evened.¹⁶

By the end of the year, at the annual meeting on December 6, 1832, the Board of Managers reported to the

¹⁴ Deed Book A M, p. 239—June 2, 1832 Robert Ralston *et al.* sells site to Philadelphia Exchange Co. (Peterson).

¹⁵ Hazard, S., *Register of Pennsylvania* 9: 128, 1832.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 120.



FIG. 2. North façade of Philadelphia Exchange—(1947).
Courtesy of Charles E. Peterson.



FIG. 3. Woodcut of Third Street façade of Philadelphia Exchange. Drawn by Ed. Glenn. Hist. Soc. of Penna.

Stockholders of the Philadelphia Exchange Company on the progress made on the building, part of which report which follows was printed in a Philadelphia newspaper.

Twelve months ago the site on which this beautiful structure stands, comprising an area of fifteen thousand feet or more, was encumbered by an uncouth mass of buildings angular, unsightly, misshapen, a proverbial deformity in our symmetrical city. Since then the incubus has been removed, 700,000 bricks forming the huge chaotic mound, have been displaced, individually handled, and now form a portion of our sub-structure. The very cleansing of the soil, from this foul rubbish, cost no less a sum than \$3000. About the 10th of March, (barely nine months ago,) our masons commenced these substantial foundations, and behold in that short period 2,200 perches of stone and 900,000 bricks have been laid, besides thousands of cubic feet of marble then in the quarry, hewn and fitted to give brilliance and beauty to our edifice for untold ages.

All our contracts, even to the roofing copper, have been made. Of 28,000 cubic feet of marble, (the whole quantity required) 12,000 cubic feet and upwards have been delivered. 250,000 bricks more will be all that are needed. In the mean time, the season of the year has arrived, when it is proper to suspend the prosecution of our masonry, but we have already attained the full altitude of our second story—the lintels are over our windows.

Nor do we allow the winter to stop our progress—materials are in the hands of the workmen, the preparations of which, for their respective positions, will be complete by the opening of the spring, and six weeks after the work is recommenced, it will be ready for roofing, a temporary covering serving in the interior, to preserve it from injury by the weather. By extraordinary exertions, the Post Office may be located in its destined apartments in May, but it will probably be July before the whole building is fairly under cover.¹⁷

The work on the Exchange proceeded as planned through 1833 and the Post Office opened in its new location on June 25. By November the roof and tower were completed and the cap stone set in place, which event was celebrated by a banquet for the 140 men employed on the building. At that dinner many toasts were drunk including one proposed by J. R. Chandler,

¹⁷ *The Daily American Advertiser*, Jan. 3, 1833 (Riley).

“William Strickland, the architect of the Merchants’ Exchange. He will realize the boast of the ancient emperor. He found us living in a city of brick, and he will leave us in a city of marble.”¹⁸

EXTERIOR DESIGN

That William Strickland was chosen to be architect for the Exchange in preference to John Haviland,¹⁹ was perhaps because of the friendship of two of the Board of Managers. Robert Ralston²⁰ in 1826 when Strickland was desirous of obtaining the appointment as architect of the United States Naval Asylum, wrote the Secretary of the Navy on November 1, saying in part:

Three large buildings, the Orphan Asylum, the Indigent Widows’ and Single Women’s Asylum, and the Mariners Church have been constructed and erected under his direction, in each of which, I have had to make all the payments, and consequently have derived information which enables me to bear testimony to the skill, good judgments, punctuality, and fidelity of Mr. Strickland.²¹

John K. Kane,²² the solicitor of the company who was chosen to give the address at the laying of the corner

¹⁸ Hazard, *op. cit.*, 12: 293, 1833.

¹⁹ English architect who settled in Philadelphia, designed the first Franklin Institute building, 1825, now the Atwater Kent Museum and the Eastern Penitentiary, 1825-1832, and became world famous as a prison architect.

²⁰ In 1826 Ralston was appointed Saxon consul in Philadelphia. Lingelbach, William E., *Saxon-American relations 1778-1828*, *Amer. Hist. Rev.* 17: 538-539, 1912.

²¹ Records of the Department of the Navy, Office of Naval Records and Library, P N—Naval Asylum, Phila; construction. The National Archives, Washington, D. C. (Mr. Peterson directed me to this material.)

²² Kane was president of the Beef Steak Club of which Strickland was a member. In October 1833, at a dinner at Kane’s house, 191 Walnut Street, at which Strickland was present, William Kneass read a poem. MS. copy by Strickland Kneass, 1911. Kane also wrote Strickland’s obituary for the American Philosophical Society, the original MS. copy of which is in the Society’s Library.

stone was one of Strickland's closest friends and would have encouraged his selection.

At that time, Strickland was just completing the U. S. Mint at Juniper and Chestnut and the U. S. Naval Asylum on Grey's Ferry Road and working on the Almshouse in Blockley Township. He had designed the much admired steeple on Independence Hall²³ and his plan for the Second Bank of the United States had established his reputation as an architect²⁴ [C, IV].

After the site for the Exchange had been chosen and Strickland had been appointed architect, he published a *Prospectus of a Plan for . . . an Exchange* to encourage the sale of shares in the Philadelphia Exchange Company.²⁵ He also made a water color drawing of the proposed Exchange which was widely known through the mezzotint which John Sartain made from it. The Dock Street façade was built in all essentials as it was shown in the drawing. The most notable change was that a weather vane was put on top of the tower instead of the female figure holding a trident. In the drawing the antefixes are indicated only on the curved portico, but when it was built the antefixes were continued on the flat faces of the western façade. The general design of a basement story with plain openings in the curved section and openings flanked by columns with water leaf capitals on the sides; the tripartite windows on the flanks; the Corinthian portico on the second story with stairs on either side leading to tall doors and the long windows with rectangular blank insets above under the circular portico; and the circular tower with tall narrow windows; all these features were carried out.

The sides of the building are severely plain, but harmoniously rhythmic based on a three-part design which moves both horizontally and vertically. There are three tiers of tripartite openings which give a strong vertical feeling. These are tied together by three bands of masonry. The platform of the porticos is continued around the building by a projecting band above the lintels of the ground floor openings. There are three courses of masonry below the main story windows and four above and a full entablature crowning the whole. The second story is accentuated by having openings three courses higher than the top story and by having the dividing piers ornamented with simple cap moldings. The horizontal divisions are equally rhythmic. Each opening has three lights, one wide and two narrower. These form three units: at either end there is a tripartite opening flanked by wide bands of masonry; in the center, there are three tripartite openings set closer together equidistantly (fig. 2).

The Third Street façade is also imposing with the heavy basement, Corinthian portico *in antis* with four columns and two pilasters, flanking sides with tripartite windows and crowning pediment (fig. 3).

²³ Hazard, *op. cit.* 1: 152-154, 1828.

²⁴ Gilchrist, A. A., *William Strickland*, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950.

²⁵ Copy in Free Library of Philadelphia, Ridgway Branch.



FIG. 4. The New Tower of the Royal Exchange in London, 1821. Engraving by Rawle in the *European Magazine*. New York Public Library.

It is likely that Strickland when asked to produce a design for the Exchange thought of the various Exchange buildings which he had seen in this country: the Baltimore²⁶ Exchange designed by his teacher Latrobe with a central dome and the New York Exchange²⁷ by the firm of Town and Davis with a circular tower. Joseph Jackson suggested that the circular tower of Town and Davis may have influenced Strickland.²⁸

²⁶ Strickland engraved a plate entitled "Ancient View of Baltimore" for Messrs. Coale and Maxwell of Baltimore in 1817 while the Exchange was under construction.

²⁷ Strickland may have been in New York in 1828 to see James Lloyd who acted as agent for James A. Hillhouse of New Haven. Strickland made designs of a house for Hillhouse that year. Drawings and letters are in the Sterling Library, Yale Univ., New Haven.

²⁸ Jackson, Joseph, *Development of American architecture*, 88, Phila., David McKay, 1926.



FIG. 5. Pavilion in the park of Klein-Glienicke near Potsdam; architect K. F. Schinkel, 1836. Courtesy of Ernest Nash.

However, Strickland had been in Great Britain in 1825 and seen the Exchanges in Dublin, Edinburgh, and London.²⁹ At that time the Royal Exchange had a circular tower (fig. 4), a new one which was currently much admired. It was designed by George Smith, Surveyor to the Mercers' Company in 1821 because the old tower by Jerman was found to be in a perilously dilapidated condition and in danger of falling.³⁰ These two examples in New York and London may have predisposed Strickland to favor a circular tower.^{30a}

Before making any plans, Strickland must have carefully studied the site with its rising ground and commanding position at the intersection of Dock and Walnut. As he stood looking at it from Dock Street, he saw at the end of Dock one of the most handsome buildings in Philadelphia, Girard's Bank, designed by Samuel Blodgett in 1795³¹ to house the First Bank of the United States and which was itself modelled on Thomas Cooley's Exchange in Dublin. The portico of that building has Roman Corinthian columns. Strickland's water color of the Exchange also shows Girard's Bank and he must have considered how his building could be harmonized with the older building. To use the Corinthian Order was the answer.

However by 1832, architectural ideas had changed since the end of the eighteenth century. Behind all architectural design there is a determining idea. By

²⁹ Strickland, William, *Report on canals, railways, roads and other subjects*, Phila., 1826.

³⁰ Wilson, *op cit.*, 48.

^{30a} The circular cupola on Latrobe's Bank of Pennsylvania, 1799, may have also influenced Strickland's design.

³¹ Gilchrist, A. A., The bankers build, *Amer.-Ger. Rev.* 17 (5): 22, 1951.

1830, the idea was that Greek architecture provided the best models for modern architects. Greek architecture was best known at that time through "the rare and costly old English work of Stuart and Revett."³² Strickland, himself is reported to have said repeatedly to the pupils in his office "that the student of architecture need go no further than the *Antiquities of Athens* as a basis of design."³³ In this instance, Strickland followed his own advice and turned to chapter IV of the first volume of the *Antiquities* published in 1762 and found the model that he needed in the Choric Monument of Lysicrates. The capitals and antifixes are meticulous copies of the Stuart and Revett plates (fig. 6) and the circular tower of the Exchange is an adaptation of the monument itself³⁴ (fig. 7).

INTERIOR PLAN

The plan for the Exchange had to provide for the Exchange room, for the reading room, for the post office, for a coffee shop and for offices to be rented out for revenue. The area of the rectangular building is 95 × 114 feet with the circular portico extending another 36 feet. There was a basement story under ground built of brick. No ground plans or views of the interior as it was originally have been found. In January 1835 a description and view of the Exchange was printed in the *Family Magazine*. The part concerning the interior plan follows:

A hall passes through the centre of the building from Dock to Third Streets, and another likewise communicates with this from the north side. The basement story [the ground floor] is fifteen feet in height—is arched throughout, and has twelve doorways on the Third street front and flanks. On the right or north side of the hall is the Post Office, seventy-four by thirty-six feet, and on the left are several insurance offices and banks, and the session-room of the chamber of commerce. Two flights of stairs, one on each side of the hall, ascend to the second floor, at the head of these is the entrance to the Exchange Room, which is on the east front, extending across the whole building, and occupying an area of 3300 superficial feet. The ceiling extending to the roof, is of the form of a dome, and supported by several marble columns. Its pannels are ornamented with splendid fresco paintings, representing Commerce,

³² *Saturday Courier*, Phila., Mar. 29, 1834, from a notice of the French translation of the *Antiquities of Athens* by M. Hittoir of Paris who "has acquired a distinguished reputation by his discovery of the extent to which the Greeks employed colors in ornamenting the interiors and exteriors of their edifices." At present we are discovering the extent to which the Greek Revival architects employed color in their interiors.

³³ MS. memoir of Horace Sellers (Fiske Kimball).

³⁴ Thomas Jefferson wrote to Robert Mills on March 3, 1826 suggesting the use of the Lantern of Demosthenes as it was then called, for a tower. Latrobe noted it in his journal. Addison, Agnes, William Strickland, *Pa. Mag. Hist. Biog.* 67 (3): 278, 1943. But Strickland was the first architect to use it. Schinkel in 1836 in the second, smaller pavilion in the park of Klein-Glienicke near Potsdam also used the choric monument as a tower on the circular colonnaded garden structure (fig. 5). Sievers, J., *Karl Friedrich Schinkel: Bauten für den Prinzen Karl von Preusser*, 112-123, Berlin, 1942.

Wealth, Liberty, etc. beautifully executed, appearing to have as striking a relief as sculptured work. On one side is a book containing a list of daily arrivals and clearances of vessels. On the right is an extensive reading-room, to which admission is gained by subscription and the payment of an annual tax. The rooms upon the right side of the hall of this floor are appropriated for the meetings of stockholders, brokers, etc. The attic story is of the same height as the basement, containing six large rooms, occupied by library associations, artists, etc.^{35, 36}

³⁵ *The Family Magazine*, 290, New York, Jan. 17, 1835.

³⁶ The following description of the interior in 1848 is to be found in the insurance survey of the Philadelphia Contributionship No. 7442 printed in Gilchrist, Strickland, 86.

"I have Surveyed the Exchange Building belonging to 'The Philada. Exchange Company' situate on Third, Walnut, & Dock Streets. Being 90 feet on Third Street, by 150 feet to Dock Street including the semicircular basement or first story & Portico, thick brick walls faced with marble. Fronting on Third Street from the second story is a portico with four large marble columns fluted & two anties all with richly carved marble capitals. On the Dock Street front is a semicircular portico with Eight columns & two Anties all with capitals &c. as those on Third Street. The first story is divided into Eleven rooms & two halls, one room large, & occupied as the Post office, the other rooms as Public & private offices, seven marble mantles, of neat patan [?], moulded base round, windows cased, & inside shutters to all these. Cornices, fire proof closets with iron doors in seven rooms, the floors of 5/4th yellow pine, laid on mortar, the whole of the basement floor is arched under. In the halls is marble wash board, stucco cornice & floored with Italian marble flags. In the large hall are two flights of marble stairs, right & left with large continued hand rail of mahogany & large turn'd ballusters & an opening though the 2nd floor about 12 by 14 feet surrounded by rail & ballusters of the same kind. All the door ways on Walnut Street, Third & part of Dock Street have each two plain marble columns with carved caps. Those on the other part of Dock Street are plain marble folding sash doors, Glass 6½ & 8½ by 15"; a vestibule with each also with folding sash doors. Glass in the windows 12 by 18". Brick partition walls dividing all the rooms.—The 2nd Story is divided into six rooms, large Hall & Exchange room, one a reading room, two marble mantles, moulded base, windows cased with double architraves, Glass 13 by 18 & 14 by 20" with panneld inside shutters, the other 5 rooms are occupied as Offices, with marble mantles & neat wash boards, inside Shutters & Stucco cornice. In the Hall is a continuation of the Stairs from the first Story—with mahogany rail & turn'd ballusters to the 3rd Story. In the Exchange room are two marble mantles, moulded base, windows cased, & inside shutters, four large columns of marble with carved caps, similar to those of the Porticos, supporting the roof & ceiling a part of which is a semicircular dome & part flat with a stucco cornice round. The walls & ceiling of this room are ornamented with Fresco painting, outside doors large & folding. The columns in this room also support a circular Lantern of wood, 40 feet high, neatly finish'd outside with Eight columns of wood & with carved capitals, carved roof, covered with copper, ornamented with carved work vane &c. sashes round. The entrance to this room from the Hall has an arch'd head, side lights, venetian door way, & close folding doors. 4 large fluted columns with carved capitals, brick partitions, between the reading room & the North west room, is a flight of open newal stairs such as before described leading to the 3rd Story. The 3rd Story is divided into Seven rooms, & passage, the floor of 5/4th yellow pine, moulded base, windows cased & panneld inside shutters. Those rooms are occupied for public & private purposes, in one is the Magnetic telegraph, operating machine. In this Story is one flight of winding Stairs leading to the Garret, & connecting with a circular Stairs in the Lantern

ITALIAN ARTISTS EMBELLISHED THE EXCHANGE

Although the ceiling decoration of the Exchange Room is described, the artist is not named in this account. He was in *The Guide to the Lions of Philadelphia*, 1837 (p. 41) fortunately. He was Nicola Monachesi, born in Italy at Tolentino in 1795. He went to Rome to study at the Accademia di S. Luca under Gasparo Landi where he gained the first prize for painting. In 1831 Monachesi came to Philadelphia, became an American citizen, and remained until his death in 1851. He early obtained commissions from Stephen Girard, Mrs. Rush, and Joseph Bonaparte. In 1832 he decorated St. John's Roman Catholic Church, then the Cathedral, with frescoes which are said to be the first real frescoes, that is painted on wet plaster, in this country. In 1834 he painted frescoes in Matthew Newkirk's house, which later became St. George's Hall. He did frescoes and altarpieces for the Roman Catholic churches of St. Mary, St. Joseph, St. Augustine, and St. Philip. In 1841-42, he exhibited a large painting of the Murder of Jane McCrae.³⁷ In the Philadelphia Directories, his address is given as 156 Pine Street and he is listed as a Portrait painter.

Two Italian sculptors worked on the Exchange. William Strickland proposed a toast to them at the dinner celebrating the cap stone.³⁸ They carved the capitals and their skill was so admired that they were permitted to sign their work. It is still possible to read on the narrow band between the top of the fluting of the

leading to the top of the Same with painted rail, close String & square ballusters. Garret formed in the centre running East & west & plastered stud partitions, floor rough white pine boards, grooved, two flat sky lights in the roof, the whole of which is boarded & covered with copper.

"In the cellar are two Furnaces, safely built in brick work, one for the use of the Post office, & the other for warming the Exchange room, the heat from which passes up through a hollow cast iron column in the hall of the first story into the room, covered by a marble curb with a brass revolving ventilator. A smaller one in the Post office of iron. Marble cornice round the whole building, copper gutterd & pipes.

7 Mo. 3rd 1848. John C. Evans
Surveyor

"Liberty of Magnetic Telegraphs in Insured Building. It is expressly understood that this Insurance is not to apply to, nor is the Company to be in any wise responsible for any injury, that may be done to the Fresco or Ornamental painting in the premises hereby Insured.

"Policy No. 7442. Drs. 10,000. at 3 per Cent Drs. 300.—
Agreed to be correct.

John C. Martin
For Phila Exchange Co.

"A Furnace in the Cellar (South West Corner) for warming the room above which appears safely constructed.

November 11th 1851 D. R. Knight
Surveyor"

³⁷ *Cyclopedia of painters and paintings*, ed. by John Denison Champlin, Jr., 3 (2): 283, N. Y., Scribners, 1887.

³⁸ Thieme and Becker, *Lexikon* 2: 489, 1908.

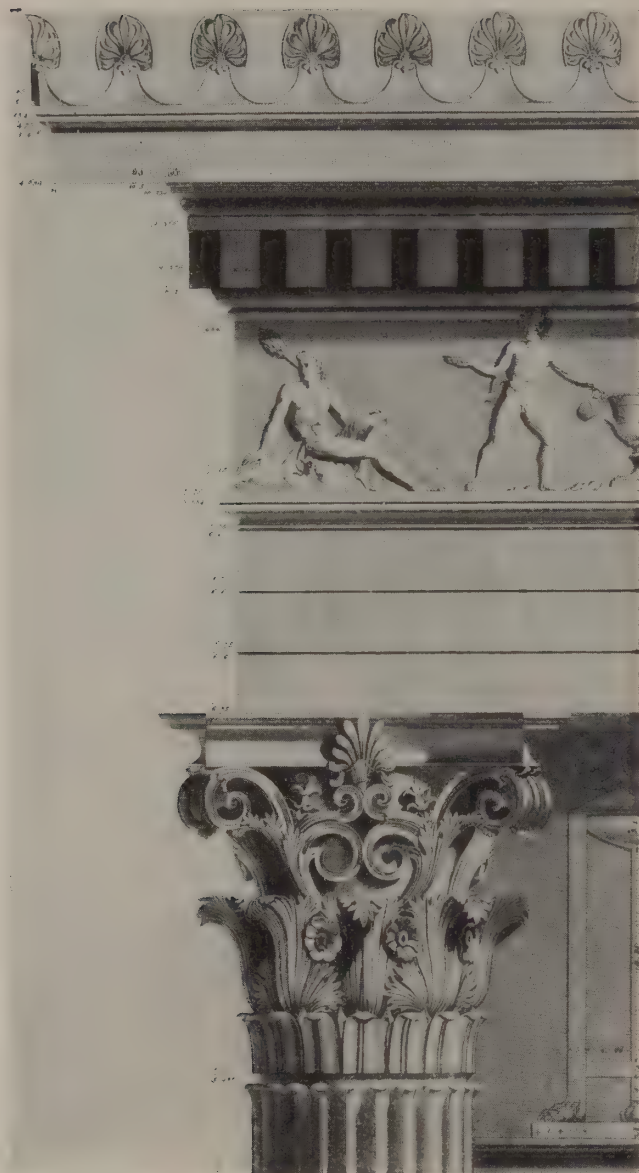


FIG. 6. The Monument of Lysicrates. Engraving from Stuart and Revett, *Antiquities of Athens*, vol. I, chap. 4. Detail of capital and antefix. New York Public Library.

columns of the Dock Street portico and the Corinthian capitals the following inscriptions: "Petrus et Philipus Bardi de Carcaria Fecurunt 1832." They were brothers who came from Carrara in Tuscany which since Roman times has been famous for its marble quarries and stone carvers. Peter, in 1818 at the Academy of Carrara, did a relief of Joseph as the Interpreter of Dreams. He was noted for his ornamental sculpture and returned to Carrara to become a professor in the Academy there.³⁹

³⁹ On the inner plinth of the rotunda is carved "W. Strickland, Architect J. Struthers Mason" as also on the Second Bank of the United States and the Mechanics Bank, 22 S. Third St.

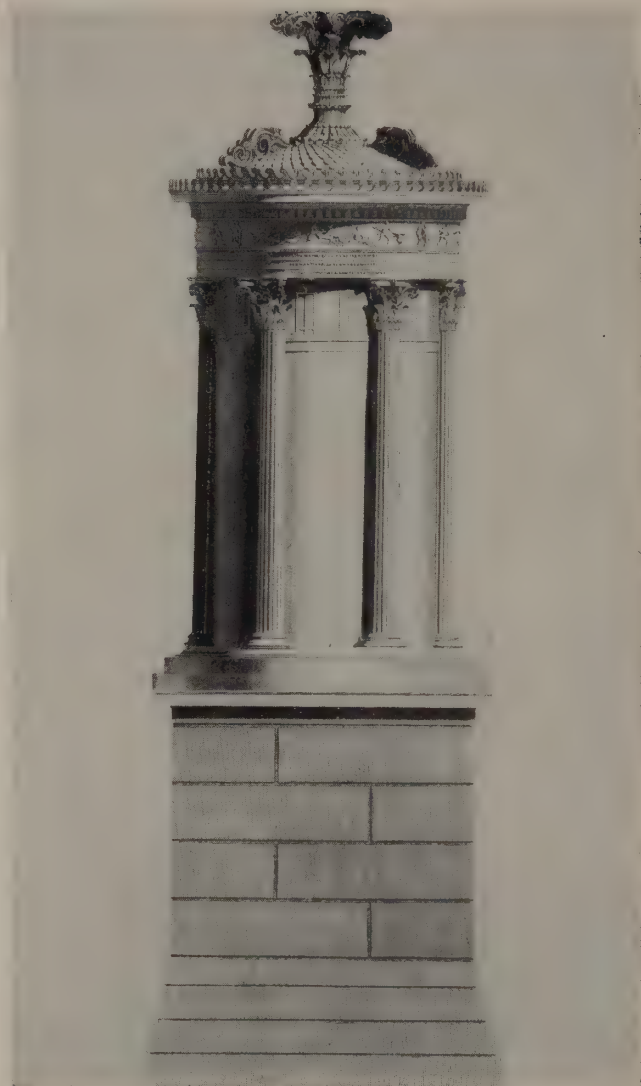


FIG. 7. The same. New York Public Library.

All the men connected with the building were skilled and had worked with Strickland on other buildings he had designed. John O'Neill had been carpenter of the tower of Independence Hall. Joseph Walter, the father of Thomas the architect of Girard College and the present dome of the Capitol in Washington, had worked on the second Bank of the United States. John Struthers⁴⁰ had also as well as on the Naval Asylum and the Mint. The workmen did such excellent work that at the Cap stone banquet, Strickland proposed another toast to "The artizans, mechanics and working men engaged in the building of the Philadelphia Exchange. Their good conduct and orderly deportment have been

The plaque on Struther's shop at 360 High Street is now in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. In 1837, Struthers donated the marble sarcophagi which contain the remains of George and Martha Washington at Mount Vernon, Va.

⁴⁰ Hazard, *op. cit.* 12: 293, 1833.

as remarkable as their skill and excellence of workmanship."⁴¹

EARLY HISTORY OF THE EXCHANGE BUILDING

On January 2, 1834, when the building was almost completed, the Board of Managers held a meeting at which they decided to hire a superintendent of the Exchange and Reading Room at a salary of \$1,500 a year and announced the appointment of Joseph M. Sander-son. They also announced the lease of the room on the ground floor to the Post Office for ten years and that the basement and second-story rooms were completely rented and part of the cellars and the third story. The rents already assured were \$9,800 a year and another \$1,500 was expected making an annual revenue of \$11,300. The land had cost \$75,000 and the estimate for the building was \$159,435.

At that time, there was one problem which had not been solved. That was where to place the privies. It had been decided to have none within the building, but to use the ground between the Exchange and Mr. Gowen's wine shop on Third and Dock, but it had become evident that situation for the privies was "entirely inadmissible, because of the immediate vicinity of the Post Office to which all classes of our citizens *female* as well as male would be obliged to resort." The solution was to buy the lot at No. 60 Walnut Street which extended 138 feet back along Pear Street and place the privies there.⁴²

On March 22, 1834 the Merchants Coffee House on Second next the Bank of Pennsylvania burned down. The Philadelphia merchants had conducted their business there for many years. Fortunately, the Exchange was sufficiently finished to permit it to be used for business the following day, March 23. During the following weeks many people visited the building, including the ladies who were specially invited to view it.⁴³

The Philadelphia Exchange Company had a meeting on April 5, 1834 with John R. Neff in the chair and Richard Price as secretary. It was then determined that one o'clock should be the hour of High Change and all those wishing to do business should be there five minutes before. On the same day there appeared in the papers a letter signed "A Merchant" which said in part:

⁴¹ Desilver's *Philadelphia Directory and Strangers' Guide* for 1835 and 1836 contains a map by J. Simons of "Philadelphia as it is in 1834" Published by C. P. Fessenden which shows the ground plan of the Exchange and the shop of James Gowen, wine merchant at 69 S. Third St. next to it. The article on the Exchange in *The Family Magazine*, Jan. 17, 1835, has an illustration showing the Exchange and Girard's Bank, which view the article calls, "one of the most imposing for architectural display of which Philadelphia can boast. We would respectfully recommend, however, the demolition of Mr. Gowen's wine store, which is the only object that detracts from the beauty of the picture."

⁴² Hazard, *op. cit.* 13: 12-13, 1834.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 208.

As regards the Philadelphia Exchange, I hope that every individual in the city and county who does anything like a wholesale business, whether he be a merchant, manufacturer, dry goods merchant, grocer, broker, shipmaster, builder, or lawyer, or retired capitalist, will consider it his duty to be present *for at least 5 minutes* of each day at one o'clock—if business requires.⁴⁴

The Notebook of Francis Gurney Smith (owned by Mrs. H. B. Dupont)⁴⁵ adds the following bits of information about the Exchange. The weather vane was put up on October 31, 1833. The clock in the Exchange Room was started Wednesday June 18, 1834. Gas was introduced into the reading-room at the Exchange on Saturday April 2, 1836.

By June 22, 1835 the Philadelphia Exchange Company was able to obtain a mortgage for \$60,000 from the city.⁴⁶

McElroy's Philadelphia Directory for 1837 lists the following Marine Insurance companies as having offices in the Exchange building which by then was always referred to as the Merchants Exchange: Union, office No. 6; Delaware No. 3; United States No. 5; Atlantic No. 4 and also the American Insurance Company as being at the N. E. corner. William Strickland, architect, is listed at 31 Exchange and J. A. C. Trautwine, architect, at 24 Exchange.

The 1837 Guide to Philadelphia gives a picture of the Exchange and comments of it that "It serves the purpose of a commercial and financial center of the city." It notes that there is a bar on the ground floor and after describing the principal story concludes, "The building is surmounted by a cupola, which affords a commanding view of the commercial part of the city and the river."⁴⁷

The Dock Street front of the Exchange was the headquarters for the omnibus lines in Philadelphia and the same guidebook in describing another sight in Philadelphia in 1837, the Fairmount Waterworks, notes, "A stranger may take passage in an omnibus at the Merchants' Exchange, and reach the water works in half an hour." The Guide for 1849 lists all the city omnibuses and how often they left from the Exchange. At that date the omnibus for Girard College left every 15 minutes and the fare was 6¼ cents. The Western Rail Road also passed in front of the Exchange and William Strickland was the engineer in charge of laying the tracks which came from Market Street, along Third and down Dock in front of the Exchange.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁴⁵ From Mr. Peterson's notes.

⁴⁶ *Journal of Select Council*, Jan. 5-July 2, 1863, App. p. 204 (Riley).

⁴⁷ Americans of that period had a positive mania for climbing monuments, towers and cupolas. Perhaps they were curing themselves of vertige in anticipation of the skyscraper. Desilver, *op. cit.* in describing the Old State House or Hall of Independence advised, "Its top is surmounted by a steeple, to which every citizen has ready access, and from which, in a clear day, may be enjoyed one of the most splendid views in our extended country, of which no stranger should omit the gratification."

⁴⁸ *Journal of Select Council*, 126, 1835/36.

Later views of the Exchange show recumbent lions of marble guarding the outer stairs to the Exchange Room, but the early views do not. It appears that about 1838 they were placed there, the gift of John Moss (1774–1847), a Philadelphia merchant.⁴⁹ They were imported from Italy and are copies of the lions by Canova in St. Peter's in Rome. The lions are now at either side of the steps leading toward the river from the west entrance of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Strickland was in Rome in 1838⁵⁰ and may have had something to do with importing the statues of the lions. On his return from Europe, Strickland was appointed engineer of the Asphalte Company of the United States⁵¹ and on February 21, 1839 presented a Memorial to Common Councils recommending the use of "Asphaltic blocks for paving the streets."⁵² In this connection, it is interesting to read the description of the Exchange which appeared in the Philadelphia Guide for 1849, especially the part which follows: "the eastern front being circular, embellished with a portico recessed, with columns in the Corinthian style, having a fine piazza paved, or rather covered, with asphalte, with beautiful patterns formed of pebbles."⁵³

The Post Office remained in the Exchange for thirty years until a separate building was completed in 1862 on Chestnut Street⁵⁴ next to Strickland's bank which was then the Custom House, and it remained there until the Drexel Building superceded it and the Post Office moved to Ninth and Chestnut. Postage stamps were first sold in the Post Office in the Exchange in 1847,⁵⁵ but the idea of prepaying for letters took several years to become established as a description of the Post Office in 1849 shows.

It [the Post Office] is admirably arranged throughout. Strangers wishing letters will apply at the first window in the western entry having a sign with *Paid Letters* over it. Here also are received letters on which the postage is desired to be paid. The window in which all unpaid letters are dropped is on the outside of the building.⁵⁶

LATER HISTORY OF THE EXCHANGE BUILDING

Until the Civil War, the Philadelphia Exchange was admired as one of the fine buildings in the city and it was used as it was originally intended. During the war,

⁴⁹ *The Philadelphia Bulletin*, Nov. 24, 1937. "Pedigreed Lions Guard City Art" by Sanford A. Moss (Fiske Kimball).

⁵⁰ Strickland, William, *Sketches of Roman Architecture*, a portfolio of watercolors in the Tennessee State Library, Nashville.

⁵¹ *Journal of Common Council*, 167, 1838/39.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1839.

⁵³ *A hand-book for the stranger in Philadelphia*, 47, 1849.

⁵⁴ *Smith's hand-book and guide in Philadelphia*, 56, 1870.

⁵⁵ Baker, Charles R, *Post office buildings of Philadelphia. Phila. Hist.* 2 (9). The post office had been at 109 Chestnut Street before moving to the Exchange.

⁵⁶ *A hand-book*, 1849, *op. cit.*, 96.

the first Exchange company dissolved. The Corn Exchange of 1866 and the Philadelphia Stock Exchange of 1875 took its place. Then too, the Greek Revival was no longer the admired style of architecture. The French Baroque became fashionable. The Post Office of 1862 had a mansard roof or as contemporary writers called it a "mashed attic." By 1867, when a survey was made of the Exchange for the Philadelphia Contributionship Company, the interior had been greatly changed. The Rotunda had been divided and two offices put in, many of the rooms were subdivided and water closets had been installed.

From then on the building ran down steadily until in 1900 when the Philadelphia Stock Exchange decided to move from the east wing of the Drexel Building and to move back into the Exchange Building, the Building Committee permitted the architect, Louis C. Hickman, who was retained to supervise the alterations, to rebuild the interior completely, the roof and the tower and found his work "entirely satisfactory."⁵⁷

The building became reoriented after its purchase by the Hallowell Estate on March 22, 1922, partly owing to the growth of the city to the west and the Third Street entrance became the main entrance and the Dock Street portico the back—the Hallowell Estate operated the building as the Produce Exchange. The lions were removed, the outside stairs were pulled down; market sheds put up instead and, on the north, a gas station.

In 1952 the Exchange was taken over by the National Park Service to form part of the Independence National Historical Park Project. The intention is to restore the exterior as nearly as possible to its earlier appearance and to return the lions to their former positions beside the outer stairs.

In the last thirty years, as the building itself has become more delapidated, architectural historians have become increasingly aware of its architectural importance. Joseph Jackson wrote of it.

This structure, which still survives although thoroughly ruined by modern additions . . . was the finest structure of its kind then in the country and really marked the beginning of a new era in architecture in America. . . . Strickland . . . set off an otherwise flat structure with a copy of the choragic monument to Lysicrates. This was a daring innovation, placing one structure upon another, but the effect was found to be attractive, and the building has remained until lately, one of the best examples of the period when American Architecture had released itself from British tradition.⁵⁸

Rexford Newcomb had high praise for the Exchange Building in his essay on Strickland and Shapleton, whom he quotes, is lyrical in his eulogy.

⁵⁷ *Souvenir history of the Phila. Stock Exchange*, 1903 (Peterson).

⁵⁸ Jackson, *op. cit.*, 206–207.

In the design the architect gives us a unique and original composition—the main rectangular mass, with its lovely *in antis* portico, fronts Third Street, but at the rear where Walnut runs into Dock Street, a semi-circular colonnaded rotunda, flanked by admirable steps and surmounted by a cupola patterned after the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates, makes a pretty termination that capitalizes its site most magnificently; “a classic structure,” remarks Shakleton, “perfect in mass and detail, an up-standing, forth-facing, audacious building, looking out from its sweeping curve with such graceful bravery as gives a veritable Victory of Samothrace air.”⁵⁹

The final summing up of the architectural importance of the Philadelphia Exchange as it is judged by mid-twentieth century critics is best given by quoting in part what Talbot Hamlin writes of it in his volume, *Greek Revival Architecture in America*.

But it was undoubtedly in the Exchange . . . that Strickland achieved his Philadelphia masterpiece . . . in every detail of the design the quality of each part is stressed, and yet the whole is brought into the most perfect unity. The windows of the rectangular part are wide, the motion horizontal, the wall surfaces simple; and this, the simpler part of the design, is by itself one of the most charming examples of that true aesthetic functionalism which underlies so much of the best Greek Revival work. But this alone is not enough; in addition horizontal lines lead inevitably to the climax of the building, the superb curved colonnade of the front, with its conical roof and its delicate lantern founded on the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. Here each part of the composition falls so naturally into place that even the purists can find little to criticize in the derivative nature of the detail. Not only as a building, but also as a piece of city decoration, the Philadelphia Exchange takes its place as one of the great creations of American architecture.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Newcomb, Rexford, William Strickland. *The Architect*, 455, July 1928.

⁶⁰ Hamlin, Talbot, *Greek revival architecture in America*, 79–80, N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1944.

EARLY VIEWS OF THE PHILADELPHIA EXCHANGE

*In the Historical Society of Pennsylvania:*⁶¹

Drawings:

1. Wash drawing signed W. Strickland Architect et pinxt not dated, probably done in 1831 or 1832 before the completion of the building because of differences: the female figure on the tower; the square post to support the lamps by the outer stairs; the omission of the scrolls by the lamps and the antefixes on the flat parts of the western façade.
2. Pen and ink and charcoal drawing. Unsigned and undated. Used as a model for an engraved fire insurance policy.

Engravings:

3. Mezzotint by John Sartain after Strickland.
4. Lithograph by J. C. Wild, published by Chevalier, 1838.
5. Line engraving by Davis after Bartlett, 1839.
6. Colored lithograph of J. T. Bowen, 1840.
7. Lithograph by George Lehman.
8. Reproduction of a wood cut of Third Street front, drawn by Ed. Glenn, figure 3.

Photograph:

9. Early photograph taken in nineteenth century before changes, figure 1.

In the Atwater Kent Museum of Early Philadelphia:

10. Lithograph by A. Köllner.

In Harper Collection of Stricklandia in Old Custom House:

11. An illustration from *Gleason's Pictorial*, May 6, 1854.

Illustrations in Magazines and Guides:

12. *The Family Magazine*, January 17, 1835, p. 290.
13. *A Guide to the Lions of Philadelphia*, 1837, p. 41.
14. *A Hand-Book for the Stranger in Philadelphia*, 1849, p. 47.
15. *Smith's Hand-Book and Guide in Philadelphia*, 1870.

⁶¹ There is also a portfolio of views not listed here, including a Talbot type dated Aug. 16, 1849.

CARPENTERS' HALL

CHARLES E. PETERSON

Resident Architect, Independence National Historical Park Project



FIG. 1. North Elevation, 1786. Engraving from the Company's rule book, probably from the architect's drawing. Carpenters' Company Library.

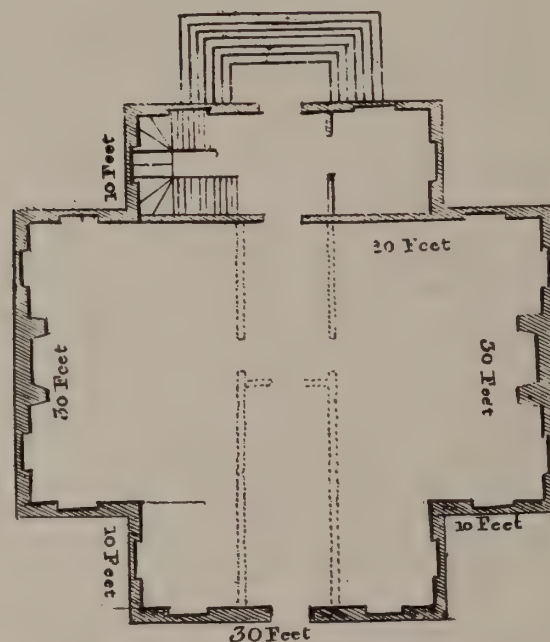


FIG. 2. Ground Floor Plan, 1786. Engraving from same work showing central hallway partitions removed soon afterwards. Carpenters' Company Library.

FOR nearly two centuries the neat little brick hall of the Carpenters' Company has stood in a small court off Chestnut Street [D, IV], not far from the Delaware River. The building has been physically associated with many events and personalities of national, state, and local importance but no satisfactory account of them has ever been assembled. The writer offers this compilation as a beginning.¹

¹ This essay was first published in mimeographed form January, 1948 ("Notes on Carpenters' Hall," U. S. Natl. Park Service, St. Louis, Mo., 44 pp.). A portion of it, reworked, appeared as "Carpenters' Shrine" in *American Heritage* 3 (1): 43, Fall, 1951, and is used again by courtesy of Editor Earle W. Newton.

The writer wishes to acknowledge special favors and assistance given by the staff of the American Philosophical Society, the Carpenters' Company, including Mr. Charles Jackson, Custodian of the Hall, and Miss Louise Hall of Duke University.

The extensive collection of manuscripts, bound and unbound, in the library of the Carpenters' Company are not organized so this writer was unable to make complete use of them in the time so far available.

BUILDING THE HALL

Probably the oldest builders' organization in the United States is the Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia.² The year of its founding was 1724. The town was then still young and Ben Franklin—also young—had just come down from Boston to try his fortune as a journeyman printer. It was the beginning of a great era.

The new association was formed "for the purpose of obtaining instruction in the science of architecture and assisting such of their members as should by accident be in need of support, or the widows and minor children of members. . . ."³ The names of the ten original asso-

² At the time of incorporation—in 1790—the founders were referred to as "House Carpenters." Beyond the maintenance of a library, nothing has been published about the program of the Company for architectural training, although it is known that classes were conducted in the nineteenth century. The disbursement of relief funds for disabled members and families of the deceased was an important function and is often detailed in the records.

³ The Act of Incorporation of 1790 by the Pennsylvania

ciators have been preserved⁴ but the records of the first forty years were long ago lost. That founder James Portues bequeathed the Company his architectural books in 1734, that the Company itself made an appropriation for this purpose in 1736 and that a second company of carpenters was assimilated in 1752 are the only traditions which have been preserved for this early period.⁵ Presumably meetings were held in the homes of members or in taverns, as were those of Franklin's Junto, organized about the same time.⁶

The exact professional nature of the association in the earliest years is likewise obscure. Membership in the Company seems always to have tended towards master carpenters rather than journeymen. In this way it was more of a contractors' organization than a trades union in the modern sense. The Reverend Manasseh Cutler of Ipswich mentioned the Company in 1787 as "a number of wealthy mechanics, principally Carpenters."⁷ In 1818 it was described by the English architect Latrobe as a "rich & numerous Guild."⁸ But the master carpenter, while trained as a mechanic in the use of tools was more than a carpenter. He shared the duties of the architect and the contractor of today. The members of the Carpenters' Company and their competitors were thus responsible for much of the design and con-

struction of what was growing to be the largest and best-built city in the English colonies. Before the Revolution, hundreds of houses were built annually and it took hundreds of carpenters to do it. Only a relatively few were ever admitted to the Company. There were rival organizations, but none of them achieved the prominence of the original group.

Professor Summerson's remarks about building design in the London of Sir Christopher Wren's time apply equally well to Philadelphia a century later:

There was, let us remember, no architectural profession, no definite body of men styling themselves "architect"; the term had a very special, and highly intellectual, significance. Building was carried on under the supervision of artisans calling themselves masons, bricklayers, or carpenters, and such men worked to a code handed down from the middle ages and merely modified by successive generations of craftsmen. London consisted almost entirely of the work of such men. "Architecture" was a very different thing. It was best understood in Italy, and gentlemen who had been to Italy, and even those who had not, were expected to know something about it.⁹

Although the bricklayers, the stone-cutters, the plasterers, and other mechanical trades had their own associations in Philadelphia, none of them became as well established as the Carpenters' Company.

The Philadelphia organization was undoubtedly fashioned after the trade guilds of England of which the Worshipful Company of Carpenters of London is the best known. The latter originated in medieval times and its regulations were codified in a Book of Ordinances made September 1, 1333, in the reign of Edward III. Aid to members injured "as by falling down of a house or hurting of an eye or other divers sicknesses" and a decent burial for the dead were main objectives.¹⁰ The account books of the present organization go back to the year 1438 and the charter from Edward IV to

⁹ John Summerson, *Heavenly mansions*, 62, N. Y., Chas. Scribner's Sons 1948. The life and opportunities of an eighteenth-century carpenter are described in an anonymous English book, intended to help choose a life's occupation for a young man:

"CARPENTERS . . . a Lad for this Trade ought to be stout, ingenious, write a tolerable Hand, understand Arithmetic, Geometry, and Architecture, without which Qualifications they are often little better than Labourers.

"Their working Hours are from six to six, and their Wages commonly 15 s a Week, but some make more. With an Apprentice they take from 10 to 20 l.

"To set up a Sort of a jobbing Master does not require a great deal besides tools; but there are several Degrees of them up to what are termed Master-Builders, who had need have a good deal of Judgement and Money too; and some of these are also Surveyors and Draughtsmen, whose chief Business is to draw Plans, survey and estimate other Men's Works"—— (n.a., *A general description of all trades, digested in alphabetical order*, 55, London, 1747.)

The first real study of the American carpenter-architect evolution is under way by Louise Hall of Duke University.

¹⁰ H. Westbury Preston, *The Worshipful Company of Carpenters*, 25-29, London, Geo. W. Jones 1933.

General Assembly states that ". . . in the year one thousand seven hundred and twenty-four, a number of the House Carpenters of the City and County of Philadelphia formed themselves into a Company." *Charter, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia*, 5, Phila., Patterson & White, 1916.

⁴ The ten original members, with notes by Joseph Jackson, were:

Joseph (or John) Henmarsh, who died in 1741.

James Porteus (or Portis) [Portues], who died in 1737.

Samuel Powell, referred to in Watson's Annals as "The Rich Carpenter," who died in 1756.

Jacob Usher. There are no records of Usher's death in Philadelphia, and as there later was probated a will of another of the same family, who was reported as having been of this city, but later of Virginia, it is possible that this Usher spent the remainder of his life in the latter province.

Edmund Woolley, who died in 1771, who was the original builder of the State House, now Independence Hall.

Joseph Harrison, who died in 1734.

John Nichols (or Nicholas) who died in 1756.

John Harrison, who was one of the builders of Christ Church, and who died in 1760.

Benjamin Clark, who died in 1744.

Isaac Zane, of whose death there does not appear to be any record, but that he was living in 1749 is shown by his having been recorded as executor of an estate in that year.

⁵ Joseph Jackson, *Early Philadelphia architects and engineers*, 39, 40, Philadelphia, 1923. *The Carpenters' Company of the City and County of Philadelphia (CC)*, n.a., 57, Phila., 1887.

⁶ Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*, 72, London, Putnam, 1939. Until the building of Carpenters' Hall, there seems to have been no meeting place in Philadelphia for hire.

⁷ *Life, journals and correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler* 1: 281, Cincinnati, 1888.

⁸ Latrobe to Jefferson, Baltimore, March 7, 1818, *Thomas Jefferson and the National Capital*, Saul K. Padover, Ed., 493, Washington, U. S. Govt. Print. Off., 1946.

1477 when the members were referred to as "the Free-men of the Mystery of Carpentry of our City of London."¹¹

The oldest record book preserved among the manuscripts of the Philadelphia Company shows that by 1763 the erection of a meeting hall was being contemplated:

... the following Members was appointed Jos. Fox Jno Thornhill Jno Goodwin, Benjn Loxley & Guning Bedford to fix upon a Proper Lott of Ground to Build a Hall for the Use of the Sd. Compy.¹² ... to meet in as occasion may require, to Transact the Business of Sd. Compy. & to Calculate & Settle their private Accots of measuring & Valuing Carpenters work.¹³

Five years later a site on the south side of Chestnut Street was acquired in the name of three members—

paid. The property ran back 255 feet to Howel's tanyard on the south branch of Dock Creek and behind the old public school on Fourth Street¹⁵ (fig. 3).

Plans for development were soon under consideration and at the meeting of April 18, 1768, it was recorded that

taking into Consideration the Improvement of their Lott Mr. Smith Exhibited Sketch for a Building to be thereon Erected & the Members Ware desired to Consider When Will be a proper time to Begin the Building &c.¹⁶

Whether or not Robert Smith, who was one of the most influential architects and master carpenters of his period, drew these plans himself is not known. At any rate he was one of the moving spirits of the project.

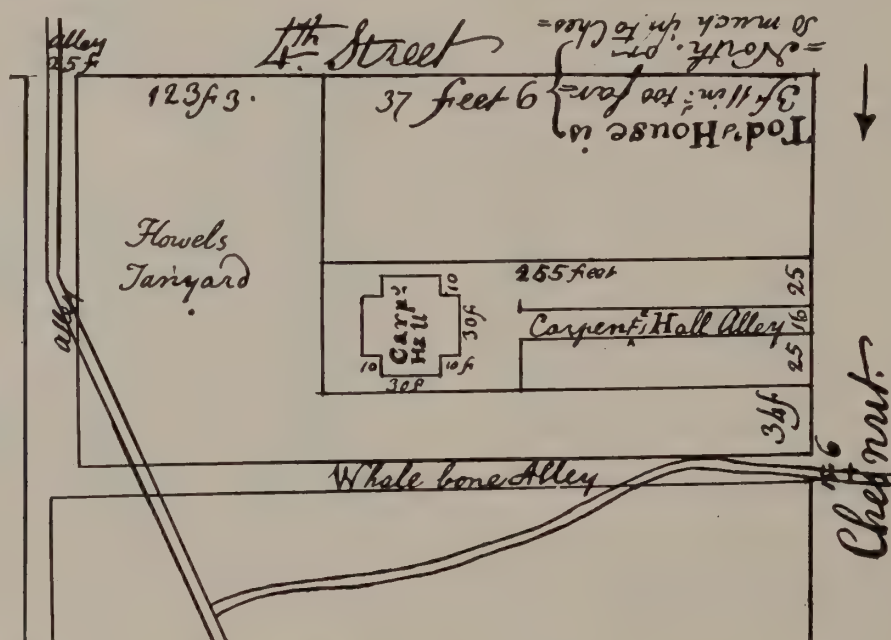


FIG. 3. Lukens MS Plat, 1785. Carpenters' Hall was built between two branches of Dock Creek (west to the top). Free Library of Philadelphia.

Benjamin Loxley, Thomas Nevell, and Robert Smith.¹⁴ This was a narrow lot with a sixty-six foot frontage on which there were already some buildings, and for which a ground rent of 176 Spanish milled pieces of eight were

¹¹ Edward Basil Jupp, *An historical account of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters of the City of London*, London, 1848. A more extensive work, not available in Philadelphia, is Bower Marsh, ed., *Records of the Worshipful Company of Carpenters*, Oxford, 1913-16 (6 v.?).

¹² Meeting of April 18, 1763. *The Act [of] Incorporation and By-Laws of the Carpenters' Company*, (AIBLCC) MS, CC Library.

¹³ *Warden's Book, 1769-1781*, MS, CC Library. In 1770 a letter mentions "The Carpenters Company that now are Joined and became members of the Old Company, which has subsisted for upwards of thirty years" (CC Library, *Minutes of the Friendship Carpenters Company*, MS, Robert Smith to FCC, Philadelphia, August 20, 1770).

¹⁴ *Philadelphia Deed Book 14*: 146 (February 3, 1768).

Before the end of the year the Company began to improve the buildings already on their lot. At least one of them was to be rented out for the benefit of the Company's treasury. Two years later the Company was ready to build their new Hall. On January 20, 1770, title in the lot was transferred from Gunning Bedford *et al.*¹⁷ and at a meeting on the thirtieth it was voted to proceed.¹⁸ Twenty-two members subscribed

¹⁵ This was the first public school in Philadelphia, founded in 1689 under George Keith. The school house, two stories high, brick, 35' x 60', was built in 1745 and demolished in 1867. The Fourth Street Meeting House, built 1763, stood within the same enclosure (demolished 1859). Watson W. Dewees, *Historical Sketch of the William Forrest Estate*, *The Friend* 89: 10, 11, 20.

¹⁶ AIBLCC, 17.

¹⁷ *Philadelphia Deed Book L7*, 48.

¹⁸ *Act to Incorporate the Carpenters' Company, etc.*, n.a., Phila., 1873 ed. (AICC), 39-41.

nearly two hundred pounds¹⁹ and a few days later—February 5—construction was begun.²⁰

Progress may be roughly followed by entries in the account books of payments for materials and labor. These are samples:

1770

Sept. 18 Cellar excavation and furnishing bricks²¹
Oct. — Cupola
Oct. 22 Shingling roof
Nov. 12 Cornice
Dec. 20 Vane and ball

1771

Oct. 24 Planing floor and fencing alley

1772

May 14 Gothic sashes for front windows
Dec. 30 Lath

1773

Jan. 14 Sash pulleys
Jan. 20 Stone Steps
Feb. 1 Doors
Dec. 21 Painting and glazing

1774

Apr. 8 Plastering
Aug. 7 Stairs

The fact that £300 was borrowed of Joseph Fox early in 1773 for the completion of the building provides a check on construction progress.²² On December 22, 1773, the Hall was surveyed for fire insurance and a policy for £750 taken out with the Contributionship for the Assurance of Houses against Loss by Fire, that

¹⁹ The original list of subscribers was:

James Pearson	£16
John Goodwin	16
Robert Smith	20
Joseph Rush	4/5/11
James Davis	10
John Hitchcock	5
John Keen	4
Silas Engles	6
Levi Budd	3
Guning Bedford	12
Mathew McGlathery	4
William Lownes	6
James Graisbury	6
James Potter	4
Isaac Coats	20
George Wood	6
William Robinson	6
Joseph Govett	4
Samuel Powell	4
Abraham Carlile	12
Ezekial Worrell	4
Joseph Fox	24

£196/5/11

Committee report of July 18, 1814. *ACM*.

²⁰ *AICC*, 31.

²¹ John Harper was paid 2/12/0 for hauling thirteen loads of ballast stone for the foundations.

²² *CC*, 40. For a life of Joseph Fox (ca. 1710–1779) see *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.*, 32: about 178–196, 1908. Fox got his start as an apprentice to James Portues and was a beneficiary of his will.

venerable company, whose records are a treasure house for architectural historians (see Appendix IV).

The architectural effect, however, was not quite complete—even in the spring of 1775—but the Company had extended itself far enough for the time being; “it was now agreed that as their Hall is now so far finished Accomadate the Compy that no More Money be Expended on their premises untill the Sums advanced by the Several members be fully paid—Except it be for necessary Repair. . . .”²³ This was the day after the Battle of Lexington and it was not until well after the War was over that the main doorways were finally added.²⁴

The first recorded use of the new Hall was for a meeting of the Carpenters' Company on January 21, 1771.²⁵ This meeting, in the dead of winter—with the glass not yet in the windows—does not seem to have been repeated. Probably it was held as an inspection of progress, many of the members having their journeymen at work there. By January of 1774, however, completion was nearing and arrangements were made for furnishing chairs and tables for the ground floor.²⁶ In April it was proposed to appoint a caretaker to keep the Hall and its furniture in order and to tend the fires.²⁷

²³ *Warden's Book*, 103 (April 20, 1775).

²⁴ Architecturally, the building never seems to have attracted much attention, probably because of its “somewhat retired” location. When it was new, young Solomon Drowne of Rhode Island called it “very pretty” (S. Drowne to Hon'd. Parents, Philadelphia, Oct. 3, 1774, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 48: 231, 1924). The turret may be seen over the tops of trees in the Charles Willson Peale view of the State House in 1778, and a little more in the *Columbian Magazine* view of January, 1790, but it was never included as a feature in the collections of William Birch and J. C. Wild, for instance. Except from a few historical writers, the structure seems to have had little popular attention before its restoration in 1857.

The old Northampton County Courthouse at Easton, Pa., built 1765, demolished 1862, has often been compared with it. An old copper plate view of this two-story cruciform building may be seen in *Hist. Soc. Penna., Stauffer Collection* 4: 373.

William J. Heller, *History of Northampton County*, N. Y., Amer. Hist. Soc., 1920 states that the courthouse in the central square at Easton “was modeled after Carpenters' Hall.” However, the Philadelphia building was built later and it is possible that the reverse was true—that an up-state courthouse design was re-used by the Carpenters' Company. Certainly the Hall, with four equal gables would be less surprising found in a public square approached from four sides than heading up the narrow courtyard where it was actually built.

Another user of the Hall in this very early period was “The Society of Englishmen and Sons of Englishmen, established at Philadelphia, for the Advice and Assistance of Englishmen in Distress” who held their quarterly meeting there on January 23, 1775. *Penna. Gazette*, Jan. 18, 1775.

²⁵ *AICC*, 31, 42.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 42.

²⁷ Meeting of April 26, 1774. *CC*, 40. On March 24, 1773 “a black woman” was paid four shillings “for cleaning the west chamber,” *CCAM*. A regular custodial service was apparently not set up until 1776. At a meeting on January 26 it was decided to pay a Mrs. Lefever (who had already been working at the Hall) a stipend of ten pounds per year for tending to the building.

THE LIBRARY UPSTAIRS

When Carpenters' Hall was about half completed, the Library Company of Philadelphia, a famous institution founded by Benjamin Franklin, was offered the opportunity of renting part of it.²⁸ The Library, then in the State House, was particularly short of space for its "philosophical apparatus."²⁹ The use of one room for £20 per year was at first considered,³⁰ but by the time arrangements were completed, the whole second floor had been leased for five years at £36.

This agreement was reached on October 26, 1772, and the Carpenters' Company proceeded "to furnish the House ready for the Library Company to move in."³¹ The latter appointed a committee for fitting up the new quarters and Thomas Nevell of the Carpenters' Company was engaged to do the joinery. The minute book shows that the new furnishings included carved cabinets and book shelves protected by wire lattice work. The windows were fitted with inside shutters³² and the rooms heated by open fire.³³ A dozen windsor chairs,³⁴ six brass sconces,³⁵ and two chandeliers³⁶ were also provided. The Library Company moved in September 6, 1773.³⁷ According to a contemporary letter "The books are kept in one large Room and in another handsome Appartment the Apparatus is deposited and the Directors meet."³⁸

The following year, as the Continental Congress convened on the lower floor, the Directors of the Library Company offered "the use of such Books as they may have occasion for during their sitting, taking a receipt

²⁸ AICC, 42 (Jan. 20, 1772).

²⁹ *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Library Company of Philadelphia (MPDLC)* MS, Library Company of Philadelphia, Jan. 10, 1772.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 29, 1772. In 1769, before the Hall was started, it had been proposed that a building be erected jointly with the Library Company. *Warden's Book*, April 17, 1769.

³¹ MPDLC, Oct. 26, 1772.

³² *Ibid.*, Apr. 24, 1773.

³³ *Ibid.*, June 4, 1786. Changed to a stove in 1786. See also *ibid.*, Mar. 5, 1789.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 24, 1773.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Aug. 30, 1773.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1773. The chandeliers, made by Gabriel Valois for £7/10, had carved and gilt roses.

³⁷ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Sept. 8, 1773.

³⁸ MPDLC 2: 93. (Letter of December 28, 1773.) The West Room was the "Apparatus Room." A novelty was offered the philosophically-minded by Librarian Francis Damon (who also taught Latin and French, boarded young gentlemen at his house in Laetitia Court opposite the pump and sold instruments and apparatus). "He had also to dispose of a few SKY OPTIC BALLS, to be fixed in the shutter of a window, to make a CAMERA OBSCURA, which will represent objects in their natural colours on a screen, so that the most exact drawings may be made of them by any person who can handle a pencil. Experiments of this curious machine may be seen every afternoon at the Library Room in Carpenters' Hall. . . ." *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 24, 1774, postscript.

Another organization to use the building at this time was the Tailors' Company who had a room for 10 shillings a night with a closet and firewood thrown in. AIBLCC, 77 (Dec. 15, 1773).

for them. The Secretary waited upon Peyton Randolph, Chairman of the Congress . . . with this offer and he was pleased to say he was much obliged."³⁹

When the Revolutionary War got under way, the Directors became apprehensive for the safety of the library and asked for authority to remove the books "in case any future Event should render that Measure necessary."⁴⁰ The Library stayed, as it turned out, although its operation was embarrassed by the use of the building as a hospital by both the American and British armies.⁴¹ High wartime prices added problems, and, after the evacuation of the British in 1778, firewood and candles became so dear as to shorten the hours of opening.⁴²

The Reverend Manasseh Cutler of Ipswich, Massachusetts, left us with the best description of the Library just after the war:

Soon after dinner, the bell of the Church near Carpenter's Hall rang, which informed us that the Library of the Hall was open, for the purpose of receiving and delivering books. We immediately repaired to it, as it was a favorable opportunity for viewing every part.

In the east room upstairs he found the book collection

. . . large and excellent . . . now become the public library of the University and the city. Every modern author of any note, I am told, is to be met with here, and large additions are annually made. The books appeared to be well arranged and in good order. But the number of books, and the arrangement, are not so large nor so ornamental as the library at Cambridge, but approaches nearer to it than any other on the continent. I was pleased with a kind of network doors to the book-shelves, which is made of a large wire sufficiently open to read the labels, but no book can be taken out unless the librarian unlocks the door. This is a necessary security from any persons taking books without the knowledge of the librarian. Here were a large number of gentlemen. I was introduced to a number of the members of the Philosophical Society.

From the Library we were conducted into the Cabinet, which is a large room on the opposite side of the entry, and over the room where the Mechanical models are deposited. Here we had the pleasure of viewing a most excellent collection of natural curiosities from all parts of the globe. They are well arranged, and are contained principally on shelves which are inclosed, having glass casements in front, the panes of which are very large. Here is a tooth of the large animals found in the Ohio Country, which weighs five pounds, and a thigh bone, four feet and some inches in length, and very thick in proportion to its length. The articulations have a fine polish, and the body of the bone is smooth. It is of a dark color, as is also the greater part of the tooth, which is one of the grinders. The thigh bone was on a high shelf, where I could not well make the attempt to lift it; but, by the weight of one end, which I raised from the shelf, judged that it would scarcely be in my power to take it up from the ground. There are several botanical volumes in this Museum, lately published. They are folios, and every plant is represented in large copper-plate cuts, colored from nature, very large and finely executed. The author's name I can not recollect. They were

³⁹ MPDLC, Aug. 31, Sept. 29, 1774.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1776.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, March 11, 1777. AICC, 32-45.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1778 (?).

presents, and no person is to be permitted to take them out, but may examine them here as much as they please. For this reason they are in the Museum, and not in the Library.⁴³

Johann David Schöpf, a German visitor and perhaps more sophisticated, wrote that "the number of books is not very great" and that the librarians "could not always find books named in the catalogue." In looking over the collection of minerals he complained that he could find "no indication of name or place of discovery."⁴⁴

As the years passed by, the book collection increased in size and value, and the Directors were not satisfied with the fire safety of the building, the lower floor and basement of which were used for a great variety of purposes.⁴⁵ By 1784, when the Carpenters' Company was asking more than double the original rent,⁴⁶ the Directors of the Library began to look around for a new location. Eventually they decided to build a new building, and on its completion in 1790 they moved out of Carpenters' Hall and turned in the keys which they had held for seventeen years.⁴⁷

THE FIRST CONTINENTAL CONGRESS

The storm clouds of the American Revolution were gathering fast while the lower floor of the Hall was being finished. News of closing the Port of Boston

⁴³ Cutler 1: 282, 283.

⁴⁴ Johann David Schöpf, *Travels in the Confederation*, 86, 87, Phila., W. J. Campbell, 1911. A bound manuscript in the collections of the Library Company, *An account of expenses*, gives some homely details of these upstairs quarters:

Sept. 1, 1787	"Paid for repairing the Lanthorn on the Stairs	-7/6
Dec. 3	"A Cord of Hickory Wood	1/8/6
	Paid for Wharfage and hauling	1/3/4
	Sawing ditto	-4/-
	Carrying ditto up-stairs and piling it	-3/-
Dec. 22	The Amount of John Weddfield's Account, for making a Door and procuring Materials for the Chimney in the Library Room	-18/3
Aug. 28, 1788	for 5 lbs. of Candles at 10 ^d	-4/2
Nov. 5	for a Pair of Sconces 9/ and a pair of tin Save-alls 2/	-9/-
Dec. 4	for Sweeping the two Chimneys and cleaning the Stove Pipes	-2/-
Oct. 17, 1789	Paid for sweeping the two Chimnies and cleaning the Stove-pipes	-2/-
Nov. 5	Paid for six Mouse-traps	-4/3"

⁴⁵ *MPDLC*, Feb. 1, 1787.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1783.

⁴⁷ The moving seems to have taken place on or about October 1. *Ibid.*, Sept. 23, Oct. 7, 1790. The improvements left behind were sold to the Carpenters' Company for £11:5:10-1/2. *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1790, Mar. 3, 1791. These were said a partition and five window shutters. (Affadavit, Jan. 5, 1791, Library Co. of Phila., uncatalogued Papers.)

An account by Zachariah Poulson, October 7, 1790 shows that the Library Company washed the windows and whitewashed the "old Apartments" as they left (*ibid.*).

The history of the new building, Charles E. Peterson, *Library Hall: Home of the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1790-1880*, was published in *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 95 (3): 266-285, 1951, and is republished in this issue.

reached Philadelphia in May, 1774, and fanned anti-British sentiment to a new pitch.

A "very large and respectable" public meeting was called on June 15 and a committee of forty-three was named to raise a subscription for the relief of Boston. Resolutions were passed condemning the conduct of Parliament, asserting the rights of the colonists, and recommending the organization of a general congress to represent all the provinces.⁴⁸ Committees of Correspondence met up and down the coast and suitable arrangements were soon developed for an assembly to sit at Philadelphia in less than three months. Master Carpenter Robert Smith, like some other members of the Carpenters' Company, was active in this movement and was soon appointed to the Philadelphia "Committee of Correspondence" which met at Carpenters' Hall on June 27.⁴⁹ The latter was the only available privately-owned meeting place in the city and anti-government political sessions were held there off and on all summer.

Already there were two well-defined factions. Joseph Galloway, conservative Speaker of the Provincial Assembly, controlled the use of the Pennsylvania State House two blocks away. Charles Thomson, staunch revolutionary spirit and Galloway's open adversary, served as secretary to the rebellious faction at Carpenters' Hall.

There were both social and business implications. Resistance to Britain was being organized on a broad basis and those marshalling public sentiment were courting the favor and support of the tradespeople and mechanics. In Boston the boycott against British goods had been originated and "carried thro' by the two venerable orders of men stiled Mechanicks & husbandmen" and the propaganda published on this occasion went on to call them "the strength of every community."⁵⁰ The Philadelphia carpenters were considered to be the most influential and best organized of the industrial bodies and the choice of their Hall was an expression of the growing democratic outlook. Up until then the mechanic had not been consulted about the affairs of government. Their opposite numbers—mechanics of New York⁵¹ and Baltimore⁵²—were likewise addressed politically and organized into the movement. These scattered groups kept in touch with each other.

The Philadelphia newspapers took up the controversy; the Royalist papers threatened the Carpenters'

⁴⁸ John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia*, 279, 1884 ed.

⁴⁹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, June 15, 27, 1774. The *Packet* for July 25 announced another meeting of this Committee at Carpenters' Hall.

⁵⁰ Ralph Volney Harlow, *Samuel Adams*, 227, N. Y., Holt, 1923.

⁵¹ The *Pennsylvania Packet*, May 30, 1774, announced that the merchants and mechanics of New York had reached an agreement relating to their Committee of Correspondence.

⁵² "Merchants and respectable mechanics of this town met at the Court House and appointed a committee to correspond with the neighboring colonies. . . ." *Maryland Journal*, May 28, 1774.

Company for letting their hall be used for such subversive assemblies⁵³ and the *Pennsylvania Packet* maintained a lively opposition. "Schoolmaster" on June 13, 1774, says, ". . . as there is no end of oppression, when fairly established in any country, we must expect tax after tax as long as the inhabitants are able to pay any. . . . It will be the same with the Labourer and Mechanic; for the man who now earns 3s a day, will not receive more than 1/6, and perhaps not so much. . . ." On July 18, 1774, there was a meeting of the Pennsylvania Provincial Committee in the Hall.⁵⁴ But the local movement was soon overshadowed by the rush of national affairs towards the crisis.

As the delegates to the first Continental Congress began to gather early in September, two meeting places were advocated—Joseph Galloway offered the State House and the Carpenters' Company again offered their Hall. The State House was overwhelmingly turned down and Carpenters' Hall was again selected.

The specific process was not without interest as described in letters of the period. John Adams, delegate from Massachusetts who had arrived in Philadelphia on August 29, took a stroll about the city the following day and noted in his journal that he had seen Carpenters' Hall "where Congress is to sit."⁵⁵ But the matter had not yet been publicly and officially settled, for on September 5 Adams wrote the account often quoted in this connection:

The members met at the City (or Smith's) Tavern, at ten o'clock, and walked to the Carpenters' Hall, where they took a view of the room, and of the chamber where is an excellent library; there is also a long entry where gentlemen may walk, and a convenient chamber opposite to the library. The general cry was, that this was a good room, and the question was put, whether we were satisfied with this room? and it passed in the affirmative. A very few were for the negative, and they were chiefly from Pennsylvania and New York.⁵⁶

⁵³ Charles J. Cohen, The origin of Carpenters' Hall, Philadelphia, with incidents of the neighborhood, *Proc. Numismatic and Antiquarian Soc. Phila.* 28: 125, 1919.

⁵⁴ *AIBLCC*, 90.

⁵⁵ Charles Francis Adams, Ed., *The works of John Adams* 2: 358, Boston, 1865.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.* 2: 365.

The incident is described more particularly by James Duane: "The Speaker of the Pennsylvania Assembly having offered the Congress the use of the State house; and the Carpenters the use of their Hall. It was agreed to take a View of each.

"We proceeded to the Carpenter's Hall. Mr. Lynch proposed the Question whether that was in all respects suitable it ought not to be fixed upon without further Enquiry.

"I observed that if the State house was equally convenient it ought to be preferred being a provincial and the Carpenter's Hall a private House. And besides, as it was tendered by the Speaker it seemed to be a piece of respect which was due to him, at least to enquire whether the State House was not equally convenient. The Question was however called for; and a great Majority fixed upon the Carpenters hall."

Edmund C. Burnett, Ed., *Letters of members of the Continental Congress* 1: 8, Washington, Carnegie Inst. of Wash. 1921. According to Silas Deane the choice was ". . . highly agreeable

A delegate from New Jersey noted that the sentiment was so strong that he and his colleagues did not dare oppose it. Both the selection of the Hall and that of Charles Thomson as secretary were decisions "privately settled by an interest made out of Doors."⁵⁷

On the first day, forty-six delegates presented their credentials, elected a president, selected a secretary, a doorman, and a messenger, and then adjourned for the day.⁵⁸

These were bold men; their lives were at stake. On September 7 Charles Carroll wrote home to his father in Annapolis "I believe the Congress will not continue to set long, particularly in this place, should the news brought yesterday by an express prove true."⁵⁹ The Congress, however, sat at Carpenters' Hall some seven weeks (fig. 4). During those momentous secret sessions a manifest of grievances against the British government was adopted, addresses were prepared for the King and for the English people, the bold resistance of Massachusetts commended, and a general embargo of British goods adopted. Committees of "safety and inspection" were authorized to implement these policies,⁶⁰ which eventually prevailed through years of war and hardship.

Galloway, it will be remembered, subsequently collaborated with the British as they occupied Philadelphia (he had the titles of "City Administrator" and superintendent of police and of the port). But afterwards he had to flee to England and his property was confiscated.⁶¹ Thomson, who had cast his lot with the other side, was to serve nearly fifteen years as secretary to the Continental Congress.

Solomon Drowne, a medical student from Providence, Rhode Island, in a letter home gives us an outsider's view of these proceedings:

They assembled at about 9 or 10 O'clock A.M. and break up at about 3 P.M. not meeting but once in a Day . . . Govr. Hopkins went with us into the Hall, which is a very convenient and somewhat retired Place. He told us there were 52 Delegates in the Whole, whom I have been since retiring together from Council. My Blood thrilled thro' my Veins at the agreeable, Pleasant View of so many noble and sage Patriots, met in the great Cause of Liberty.⁶²

to the mechanics and citizens in general, but mortifying to the last degree to Mr. Galloway and his party. . . ." *Ibid.* 1: 11. Bancroft, without citing his source, wrote "from respect for the mechanics, it was accepted by a great majority." George Bancroft, *History of the United States of America* 4: 392, Boston, 1879.

⁵⁷ *New Jersey Archives*.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 1: 27.

⁵⁹ Maryland Historical Society, *Carroll Papers* (MS) 3: 69.

⁶⁰ Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, *The rise of American civilization*, 229, 230, N. Y., Macmillan, 1934 ed.

⁶¹ *Dictionary of American Biography*, N. Y., Charles Scribner's Sons, 1931.

⁶² S. Drowne to Honour'd Sir, Philadelphia, Oct. 5, 1774, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 48: 232, 1924.

While the political debates of this body have been preserved and published, no account of the building in use seems to be available. On the ground floor at this time there were two simi-



FIG. 4. "The First Prayer in Congress," copyright 1848. T. H. Matteson's erroneous reconstruction of Carpenters' Hall interior as of 1774. Independence Hall Collection.

When war finally broke out in the spring of 1775, Congress, returning to Philadelphia, was able to transfer its sessions to the more commodious State House. Carpenters' Hall continued in use by other groups. Several important political bodies preoccupied with Revolutionary matters used it that year, various Pennsylvania groups among them. The Congressional Committee of Safety⁶³ and the Committee on American Manufactures⁶⁴ also met there and as did the main body of Congress for the funeral of Peyton Randolph, its first President.⁶⁵

Had not Philadelphia been so conspicuous in the theater of national politics during the Revolutionary period, another convention held in Carpenters' Hall would be known as one of the most famous occasions in Pennsylvania history. This was the Provincial Convention of Pennsylvania held there June 18-25, 1776.

The decision to secede from England had taken a long time and much promotion to reach. When the North-

ern and Southern colonies were ready, the Middle colonies, especially Pennsylvania, were still hesitant. Conservatism, usually charged to mercantile self-interest and to Quakerism, kept Philadelphia loyal, even though the back country with its German and Scotch-Irish population was anxious to cooperate with the radicals. By May 15, 1776, the Continental Congress had gone so far as to adopt a resolution urging the colonies "to assume all the powers of Government." John Adams called it "the most important Resolution that has ever been taken in America . . . an Epoch; a decisive event." Copies of the resolution were dispatched north and south and one was read to a large crowd in the State House Yard on May 20. The Pennsylvania Assembly was declared incompetent to handle the emergency and quick steps were taken to organize a new government "on the Authority of the People only." The Committee of the City and Liberties of Philadelphia called for a convention to organize a new government for the province.

Many eminent men, including Benjamin Franklin and Dr. Benjamin Rush, were delegates to this convention, which met at Carpenters' Hall.⁶⁶ Colonel Thomas Mc-

lar rooms, approximately 18' x 28', on either side of the central hallway, each served by a fireplace. The east-room was used.

⁶³ Richard K. Betts, *Carpenters' Hall and its historic memories*, 26, 1893 ed.

⁶⁴ Jackson, *Encyclopedia of Philadelphia* 2: 376, Harrisburg, Natl. Hist. Assn. 1931. Marshall, 16.

⁶⁵ AICC, 32.

⁶⁶ Among the ten members from Berks County were Colonel Henry Haller and Colonel Nicholas Lotz who became Wagon Master General and Commissioner of Forage and Supplies for the Continental Army, Charles Shoemaker, later Solicitor for

Kean of Philadelphia was chosen president. On the first day it was unanimously agreed to follow the other colonies in seceding from England and to call a constitutional convention for the province. The second day the qualifications for franchise were discussed, a petition from some Philadelphia Germans praying that all who were taxable be allowed to vote. This was a particularly important point to the "Associators," a radical group which included the middle stratum of Philadelphia and the western settlers who had had little representation in the old Assembly. The convention went so far as to levy forty-five hundred militia, or six battalions, on the province and summonses were sent out for the constitutional convention planned for the following month. The Continental Congress was notified that Pennsylvania desired independence and the session ended with a dinner at the Indian Queen Tavern.⁶⁷

This memorable convention, like most of the statesmanship of the times, had "no legal foundation nor any basis at law, yet it was successful in all it undertook." The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776 which resulted soon afterwards is said to have had more important and far-reaching effects than any other of the new state constitutions.⁶⁸

As the fighting came closer, the atmosphere of Philadelphia became more military. The lower floor of the Hall was commandeered as an infirmary for disabled American soldiers under the command of General Gates,⁶⁹ and the cellar by the Army as office and storehouse.⁷⁰ When Philadelphia was evacuated and occupied by the British army in September 1777, the Hall was continued as a hospital.⁷¹ It had also to shelter inmates of the city almshouse turned out for the quartering of British troops.⁷² The following June the city was re-occupied by the Americans and the Continental Army was back in the Hall. The Barrack-Master had suddenly called on the Carpenters' Company for space⁷³ and the lower floor and cellar were taken over by Colonel

Flower, Commissary-General of Military Stores, and various ordnance shops were set up on the lot.⁷⁴

The military supplies at the Hall temporarily assumed tactical importance when "Fort Wilson" (the house of James Wilson in an adjoining block) was surrounded by a mob during a local riot of 1779. General Nichols and Daniel Clymer of the defending party "proceeded hastily to the Arsenal at Carpenters' Hall, and filled their pockets with cartridges: this constituted their whole supply."⁷⁵ The mob was held off.

The Continental Congress returned to Carpenters' Hall briefly on June 21, 1783, when their usual meeting place—the State House—was besieged by mutinous veterans of the Continental Army. After this unhappy occasion the body then adjourned to Princeton "grossly insulted by the disorderly and menacing appearance of armed soldiers."⁷⁶

AFTER THE WAR

All through the 1780's—which saw the end of the Revolutionary War—the Commissary-General of the Continental Army occupied the main floor of Carpenters' Hall—and its basement—and the Library Company remained on the second floor. The American Philosophical Society for a time used the west, or "apparatus room" of the latter. Just where the Carpenters' Company itself met is not clear.

The Philosophical Society, founded by Benjamin Franklin and six associates in 1743 (and, therefore, the oldest learned society in this country) had met in various places. During most of the Revolutionary War meetings were suspended, but on April 7, 1780, the "Committee on Room" was directed to apply for joint use of the Library Company's space.⁷⁷ This was successful, for on April 11 the curators were ordered to move the Society's effects from the University to Carpenters' Hall.⁷⁸ The minutes, however, identify only a few meetings held there and it was regarded as a temporary measure at best.⁷⁹

Continental Loans, and Joseph Heister, U. S. Senator and Congressman and Governor of Pennsylvania. Captain Benjamin Loxley of Philadelphia, member of the Carpenters' Company, was also a delegate.

⁶⁷ James E. Gibson, *The Pennsylvania Provincial Conference of 1776*, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 58: (4): 312-341, 1934.

⁶⁸ J. Paul Selsam, *The Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776*, 136-145, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1936. J. Paul Selsam and Joseph G. Rayback, French comment on the Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 76: (3): 311, 1952.

⁶⁹ *MPDLC*, Mar. 11, 1777.

⁷⁰ *CC*, 63. It was later decided (Oct. 23, 1778) that the rent for Army use in this period would be £60 per annum, *CC*, 42.

⁷¹ *AICC*, 32-45. About June 1, 1777 one John Hanlon had rented a part of the building. His rent was substantially readjusted later because the British had interfered with his occupancy. *CC*, 42.

⁷² The diary of Robert Morton, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 1: 35, Dec. 8, 1777, says "The poor are very much necessitated, are turned out of the Bettering house, put into Fourth Street meeting house, the Lodge and the Carpenters' Hall."

⁷³ *Warden's Book*, 117. Rent, £110 per annum.

⁷⁴ *CC*, 45. The rent was later raised to £180 on January 1, 1779. *CC*, 43. Jackson, *Encyclopedia* 2: 376, gives the 1778 occupant as "U. S. Barrackmaster."

A brass-founder's and file-cutter's shop was built on part of the lot for what was probably the Board of War and Ordnance of the Continental Congress. *CC*, 46. A little later permission to erect a forge was denied. *Ibid.*, 48. Richard Peters of Philadelphia was Secretary of this board from 1778 to 1781. Benson J. Lossing, *Pictorial field book of the Revolution* 2: 661, 662, N. Y., 1851.

⁷⁵ John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia* 1: 425, 1879-81 ed.

⁷⁶ Frank Willing Leach, When our Revolutionary troops mutinied, *The North American*, May 30, 1915. In May of 1784 the Pennsylvania Society of Cincinnati met here while the national body met at the State House and elected George Washington President-General. Joseph Jackson, Washington in Philadelphia, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 56: 138, 139, 1932.

⁷⁷ *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 22 (119): 107, 1885. Amer. Philos. Soc. *Archives*, May 19, 1780. Report of Committee.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 108, 109.

⁷⁹ In most cases the place is not specified. On one occasion—

For one thing, Carpenters' Hall was not considered secure against fire⁸⁰ and the Society was concerned for the safety of its scientific collections.⁸¹ The cases containing the library and books of natural history were put under the care of Librarian David Rittenhouse, who thought it best to move them to his home.⁸² By 1785 the Society had begun the construction of its own building on Independence Square and it finally transferred there late in 1789, just as the Library Company was moving into its own new hall immediately across Fifth Street.⁸³

Manasseh Cutler again left us a good description of the lower floor of Carpenters' Hall in this period. He found there a sort of agricultural headquarters:

As we entered the Hall, we went into a spacious middle entry, and turned to our right into the part of the Hall where the models of mechanical instruments and various kinds of machines are deposited. The room was very high and large, and contained models of almost every kind of farming instruments, such as plows, harrows, hoes, spades, carts, wagons, etc., constructed in different forms, some in full size, others in miniature; models of all kinds of mills, machines for cleaning grain, dressing flax, hemp, etc.; models in the several orders of Architecture, and various other mechanical instruments, more than I am able to recollect. It is easy to conceive of the great utility of such a cabinet. Every ingenious man has a kind of bounty offered for the exertion of his inventive faculties, for here he may deposit his invention, which he may be assured will be received with particular attention and respect to him; and he has the prospect, if he is unable himself to carry it into experiment and use, that somebody else will do it, while he secures to himself the honor of the invention, and satisfaction of rendering service, if it succeeds, to his fellow creatures.⁸⁴

In these surroundings met the local Agricultural Society, founded 1785. General Washington noted in his diary that he attended one of its sessions the same year.⁸⁵

in September 1787—they met at Franklin's own house. *Ibid.*, 153. See Van Doren, 771, or A. H. Smyth, *Writings of Benjamin Franklin* 11: 1, N. Y., Macmillan, 1906. Three meetings in December, 1783 were held at the University. *Ibid.*, 120.

⁸⁰ *MPDLC* 2: 44.

⁸¹ The state of the "natural curiosities" in the museum in the spring of 1783 is reported on by Curators Samuel Duffield and Eben Hazard: "We find some of them to be absolutely perished:—from others the Spirit has totally evaporated; but we think they may still be preserved:—others stand in need of an Addition of Spirit;—and the Remainder are in good Preservation." (*Amer. Philos. Soc. Archives*, Apr. 2, 1783.)

⁸² *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 22 (119): 119 (Nov. 21, 1783), 120 (Dec. 5, 1783), 1884.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 130, 131, 134, 176.

⁸⁴ *Cutler* 1: 281, 282.

⁸⁵ Washington's Diary, July 3, 1787, quoted in *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 19: 183, 1895, *The Columbian Magazine* 1: 733, 1787, noted a drill designed by Colonel George Morgan displayed there in the autumn. Jacob Hiltzheimer mentioned a meeting at the Hall February 3, 1789. Mease, 266, described the Society as follows:

"This society was formed in the year 1785, by some citizens, only a few of whom were actually engaged in husbandry, but who were convinced of its necessity, and of the assistance which such an association, properly attended to, would afford to the interests of agriculture. The society continued to meet regularly

Passing over to the east room, where the Continental Congress had met, Cutler found a sort of historical and military collection:

It is now improved as the depository of the Trophies of War which established and crowned that bold and glorious Declaration. These Trophies consist of pieces of Cannon, small-arms, side-arms of officers and men, Colors, standards, tents, military chests, and all the various accouterments of officers and men; and many complete uniforms of different regiments, from field officers down to privates, collected principally from the two captured armies of Burgoyne and Cornwallis. There are also in this collection several trophies captured by partisans of the American Army, in bold and desperate attempts, displayed in honor to those Heroes who obtained them.⁸⁶

The first good pictorial record of Carpenters' Hall appeared when Hall and Sellers of Philadelphia printed the Company's first rule book in 1786. This is a rare work; only a handful of complete copies are known. Copper plate engravings of the floor plan and front elevation of the Hall were included⁸⁷ and they are reproduced here (figs. 1 and 2). They were probably taken from the original working drawings, now lost. The front of the building is now pretty much as shown, except for some decorative urns on the roof.⁸⁸ The "frontispiece," or decorative doorway seen on the copper plate, was not added until four years later and with a somewhat modified design.

The first floor plan as engraved is most important to our understanding of the building. The partitions implied by the insurance survey of 1773 (defining a central

for several years, and published numerous communications from practical men, in the newspapers of the day, on various interesting subjects; and thereby contributed to diffuse the knowledge of many improvements in agriculture; the general adoption whereof, has visibly tended to increase the product, and to improve the qualities of the soil of Pennsylvania."

⁸⁶ *Cutler* 1: 282. This is the only mention found of an historical museum in the building at that time. One cannot help wondering whether Cutler or his editors got mixed up with Independence Hall. The diary calls this the room where "the Declaration of the Independence of the United States of America was framed, signed, and declared by Congress." In this he was, of course, mistaken. He may have been told that this was the place where the Province of Pennsylvania approved the Declaration of Independence, which could have been true.

⁸⁷ *Articles of the Carpenters Company of Philadelphia and their rules for measuring and valuing house carpenters work*, Phila. 1786. The plates were not numbered. Miss Hall has shown that Thomas Nevell made the drawings on which the engravings were based. They were approved at a meeting July 18, 1785 and Nevell was paid \$32.00 for them. On July 3, 1786 Thos. Bedwell, "Coper Plate Printer" was paid six pounds and on January 15, 1787, Hall and Sellers, fifteen pounds "for printing the Books of the rules for Measuring and Valuing house Carpenters work." *CCAB*.

⁸⁸ It is doubtful that the urns were ever placed. They are not mentioned in the rather detailed bills for work performed. If used originally, they were removed long ago. In the American climate such features on a shingle roof are likely to cause leaks. An unsuccessful attempt to locate the framing which would have supported these urns was made by the writer when the slate roof was removed in 1951.



FIG. 5. Early Candle Sconces. Drawing by Kennedy of two fixtures preserved at the Hall and believed to be original. Hist. Soc. of Penna.

hallway through the building) are shown as dotted, indicating that their removal had either been accomplished, or was planned. As will be seen later, they had been missing at least as far back as 1801 when the ground floor was one large room. In other words, this major change in the first floor plan took place between 1787 and 1801.⁸⁹

As the new building of the Library Company on Fifth Street [C, IV] was being finished in the summer of 1790, steps were taken to improve Carpenters' Hall which would soon have its upper floor vacant for the first time. The architectural completion of the exterior was undertaken at this period.⁹⁰ On July 19, 1790, a committee was appointed "to collect materials for the steps, frontispiece, and windows of Hall"⁹¹ and on the

⁸⁹ That it took place about 1786, when the copper plate plan was published, is suggested by two items in the Company's account books:

[October 23, 1787]

"By Cash Paid Samuel Pancoast for Columns for the Hall as pr Receipt. 2:1:8."

[December 10, 1789]

"Received of Thoms Shoemaker Esqr three pounds 3/9 for two Red Cedar Logs for Columns for the Carpenters Hall & hauling. Wm Williams 3:3:9" (CCAB).

Partitions in the lower hallway would have been bearing partitions and their removal would have posed a major structural problem. Two trusses were worked into the upstairs partitions so that the second floor is suspended, rather than supported from below. A truss of this type is shown in Appendix II, fig. 5. The south end of these trusses rest on two columns evidently added at the time and still in place. It is likely that these are Shoemaker's "Red Cedar Logs" and the Pancoast columns noted above.

⁹⁰ The *Columbian Magazine*, 25, Jan., 1790, called the Hall "a roomy brick building; fronting on a small avenue or court, leading to it . . . the City Library, before mentioned, is kept here at present, and some of the apartments are occupied for public stores and offices. . . ."

⁹¹ CCAB, 53. "FRONTISPIECE . . . a subordinate feature as a porch, [or] a doorway treated more elaborately than the rest of the façade, and more or less as a separate composition

following March 27 a decorative wooden doorway with arched head and a pediment over engaged Doric columns, was installed on the north or principal entrance.⁹² Two or three years later the frontispiece of the south entrance was added.⁹³

A new tenant was soon found in the Bank of the United States. This institution had been organized at the suggestion of Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, whose department was housed at old Clark Hall on Chestnut Street in the same block. It had capi-

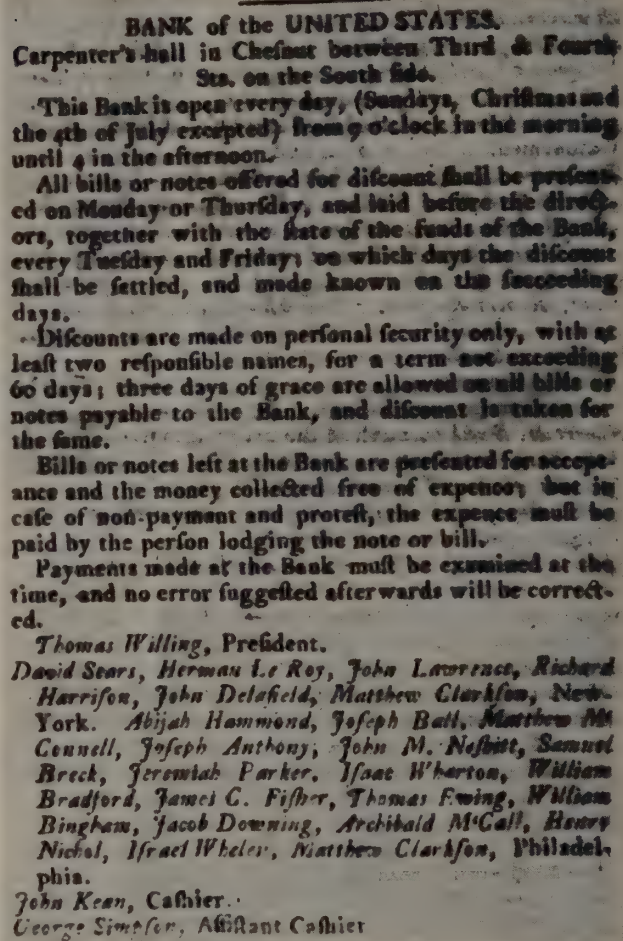


FIG. 6. Bank of the United States. Notice from the Philadelphia directory of 1794.

tal limited to ten million dollars, and besides the principal bank at Philadelphia, there were branches in six other cities. Congress granted the charter February 25, 1791, subscriptions were opened July 4 and a lease for quarters was arranged with the Carpenters' Company

applied to the front." Russell Sturgis, Ed., *A dictionary of architecture and building*, N. Y., Macmillan, 1901.

⁹² CCAB, 54.

⁹³ On November 14, 1792, William Linnard was ordered to complete the work and on November 27, 1793 he was paid £12/2/10 for it. AICC, 55.

on August 19. The indenture, which is preserved in their records, calls for an annual rental of one thousand dollars, payable quarterly. The bank commenced business in Carpenters' Hall the latter part of September with Thomas Willing as President⁹⁴ (fig. 6). Apparently it opened in the second story which the Library Company had vacated, and about the following February took over the rest of the building.⁹⁵

Because the Bank required all of the two main floors, the Carpenters' Company itself had to move out. The increased rental income⁹⁶ made it possible for the Company to build a new building on the west side of the Court for its own meetings (see Appendix IV).

A great fire which destroyed many buildings just to the east threatened the Hall on May 12, 1793⁹⁷ but the danger passed and the Bank remained here until its new building on Third Street was completed [D, IV], and it moved out on July 27, 1797.⁹⁸

The day after the bank moved out the United States Land Office under Francis Johnson, Receiver General, and John Hall, Secretary, moved in,⁹⁹ but it remained for less than a year.¹⁰⁰ In this decade (1790-1800) Philadelphia was the national capital. Congress and the Supreme Court sat in Independence Square, President Washington lived on Market Street and there were many other government offices in the vicinity.

The Land Office was followed by the Bank of Pennsylvania.

THE GREAT BANK ROBBERY

The morning of September 2, 1798, Philadelphia had something to talk about besides the yellow fever, which was again raging in the city. The back door to the banking room in Carpenters' Hall had been found open and over one hundred and sixty thousand dollars in bank notes and gold were missing from the cash vault

⁹⁴ J. T. Scharf and T. Westcott, *History of Philadelphia 1609-1884*, 464, 2093, Phila., 1884. At a meeting of the Carpenters' Company on September 7, 1791, it was announced that the Hall had been rented to the Bank. CC, 51.

⁹⁵ CC, 63. From a list of occupants of the Hall, "February 22d, 1792. George Eddy, part lately occupied by Commissary-General, and, by arrangement, given up to National Bank."

⁹⁶ AICC, 55. The rent had increased to £1000 by 1795. CSM, Nov. 1, 1795.

⁹⁷ Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, Stauffer Collection (Hist. Soc. Penna.) 12: 815. During the occupancy of the Bank a small addition at the northeast corner of the building was made to accommodate a vault and the windows were also rehung with "Iron frame puleys."—Pursuant to a petition by the directors of the Bank and decided at the June 15, 1796, meeting of the Carpenters' Company. CSM.

⁹⁸ This fine marble-front structure, designed by Samuel Blodgett and built 1795-1797, still stands just east of Carpenters' Hall at 120 South Third Street and is an important feature of the Independence National Historical Park Project.

⁹⁹ CSM, August 2, 1797. By this time the rent was up to \$1200 per annum. *Ibid.*, July 13, 1797.

¹⁰⁰ CC, 63. The dates of occupancy stated here (Oct. 3, 1797-Apr. 3, 1798) do not check with other sources.



FIG. 7. Patrick Lyon by John Neagle. Philadelphia mechanic falsely imprisoned after bank robbery of 1798. Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

of the Bank of Pennsylvania! The story of the crime and its sequel is a real melodrama.

The Bank, following its chartering in 1793, had first occupied temporary quarters. In the summer of 1798 it was in the Free Masons' Lodge in Lodge Alley, just west of Second Street [E, IV]. Arrangements had been made to rent Carpenters' Hall and for some weeks its refitting had been going ahead under the direction of carpenter Samuel Robinson. Just before the move—on August 4—an attempt was made to burglarize the vault in the lodge building. While unsuccessful, this threat hastened the transfer to the Hall, which was thought perfectly secure because of improvements made there earlier for the Bank of the United States. Among other precautions, the iron doors from the old location were brought down on a dray to the blacksmith shop of Patrick Lyon on Lombard Street for refitting (fig. 7). Various adjustments were made and the locks were remodelled, requiring several days' work of Lyon and an assistant.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Lyon had made the doors originally and though at the time he complained that they were not safe, he stated that the imported locks, bought from Joseph Simmonds, were "patent spring and tumblerlocks which no man in America could pick." It was also recorded that Lyon did some other minor smith work for the bank including "altering several lamp irons, mounting lamp posts" and "a guard iron to a glass case."

Lyon was considered one of Philadelphia's most diligent and

On August 11 the Bank started the move to Carpenters' Hall and on the fourteenth the work on the vault door was completed. The two vaults—one for cash and one for books—were located in a small brick addition on the first floor in the northeast corner. Unusual precautions were taken after the cash was moved in. Two night watchmen guarded the outside of the building and they had with them two dogs "which would not allow any body to go near the Bank." When the guards were not walking their beat, one sat in front of the hall and one in the rear. The porters slept upstairs.¹⁰²

Intense excitement followed the burglary and Governor Mifflin announced a reward of one thousand dollars for the capture of the felons. Then the inside porter who had spent the night in the Hall—a fellow named Cunningham, who kept the large key to the vault on a garter around his neck—died suddenly of the yellow fever. The Bank directors were wild to blame someone besides themselves and suspicion fell on the blacksmith Lyon, who, it was pointed out, could have provided himself with an unauthorized key while working on the doors. He was promptly thrown into the Walnut Street jail, which was then infected with the yellow fever, and held incommunicado for over three months, with barely enough provisions to keep him alive.

But the robbers were eventually identified. A personable young house carpenter named Isaac Davis¹⁰³ began to deposit suspiciously large amounts of money in the very bank that had been robbed. That led to close questioning and a confession that he and the porter Cunningham had made off with the very same money and had divided the loot between them. Then Davis disappeared.

Samuel M. Fox, president of the bank, and others—it was contended in a lawsuit which followed—had unjustly continued to keep suspicion focused on Lyon, whose health and business were damaged by imprisonment. In the trial Joseph Hopkinson, chief counsel for Patrick Lyon, *plaintiff*, contended that it was through carelessness and stupidity that the bank was robbed from the inside and through malice that Lyon's reputation had continued to suffer. There was a great display of eloquence by the prosecution. The jury finally brought in a verdict of \$12,000 damages in favor of

competent mechanics and he customarily employed four or five journeymen. About 1790 he demonstrated a superior type of fire engine of his own design, which drew favorable comment.

¹⁰² On the night of the robbery the guard "heard nothing but the hostlers who I thought drunk at Israel's stable." This was the stable on Whalebone Alley operated in connection with Israel Israel's Cross Keys Inn at the corner of Fourth and Chestnut Streets. Testimony revealed that there was no lock to the back (or south) door of Carpenters' Hall which was secured by an iron bar with a latch on the inside. The cellar door, also on that side, was locked and the window shutters were fastened from within. There was a door between the front stair-hall and the main room (as now) also with a lock.

¹⁰³ Probably the Isaac Davis admitted to the Carpenters' Company in 1794 and expelled in 1799.

Lyon, with wild applause in the crowded courtroom.¹⁰⁴ Although steps were later taken towards a new trial, the case was compromised for \$9,000, bringing to an end the cause of the poor blacksmith Patrick Lyon against the rich and respectable bankers. It was one of the most celebrated Philadelphia trials of the period.¹⁰⁵ The bank officers were probably very happy to move to their handsome new marble temple on Second Street [E, IV], completed in 1801.¹⁰⁶

Seeking the Port of Philadelphia's custom office as a new tenant, President George Ingels of the Carpenters' Company wrote to an unnamed official describing the Hall as

50 feet in front the depth the same. The principal story comprises One large room, two fire proofs and the Staircase. The Second Story is divided by a passage of eight feet wide into two large well lighted rooms and two Smaller (one the South side). The Cellar floor, well lighted and dry and of easy Access for Storeing goods.

The Court front of the Hall is well paved and will be used in common by the Carpenters Company and their Tenants occupying the Several buildings.¹⁰⁷

The offer was accepted and the building used until 1817 as a Customs House¹⁰⁸ (fig. 8).

The Customs collectorships in this period were lucrative political plums. President Jefferson appointed three at Philadelphia. The first, who arranged the move into Carpenters' Hall, was none other than Major-General John Peter Gabriel Muhlenberg, one of the most popular heroes of the Revolutionary War. He was the "Fighting Parson," who, in the pulpit, threw off his ministerial gown and revealed the uniform of a colonel of the Continental Army. After a long career in politics he was elected to the United States Senate, where he sat only two days and then resigned for the

¹⁰⁴ William Garrigues, "insurance surveyor" and member of the Carpenters' Company, 1786-1832, was foreman of the jury.

¹⁰⁵ This account is drawn from Patrick Lyon, *The narrative of Patrick Lyon, Phila., 1799; Robbery of the Bank of Pennsylvania in 1798*, n.a., Phila., 1802; *Robbery of the Bank of Pennsylvania in 1798. The Trial in the Supreme Court*, n.a., Phila., 1808.

¹⁰⁶ In the Carpenters' Company library there is an unbound MS letter from Bank President Fox dated at Philadelphia April 1, 1801, stating that his new building is nearly completed and that the space at the Hall will be released by July 1 or sooner. The new bank, designed by B. H. Latrobe, was built in the years 1799-1801.

¹⁰⁷ *Antiques, curiosities and memoranda (ACM)*, (MS) CC Library, Phila., Sept. 18, 1801. The plat which accompanied this letter has not been found. The present Philadelphia Collector of Customs has no records before 1876. The National Archives in Washington and the Historical Society of Pennsylvania each have preserved a quantity from the early days.

¹⁰⁸ *AICC*, 32. Mease wrote (p. 268) in 1811, "This society owns a hall where the custom house is now kept, in a court south of Chestnut Street, between Third and Fourth Streets, and a range of buildings in the same court." The dates of the Customs House tenancy are given in *CC*, 63, as Apr. 1, 1802-Jan. 1, 1811 and Apr. 1, 1811-Jan. 1, 1817. Scharf and Westcott (pp. 1803-1806) give the dates as 1802-1819.

Philadelphia appointment. His statue stands in the Capitol at Washington.¹⁰⁹ General John Shee, another Revolutionary figure, succeeded Muhlenberg on the latter's death in 1807 and Shee, dying in 1809, was succeeded by John Steele.¹¹⁰ The *Surveyors* of the Customs in this period were Dr. William Bache (1803) and James Glentworth (1814-1829).¹¹¹

Port of Philadelphia.

CUSTOM-HOUSE,

CARPENTER'S BUILDINGS, NEXT 116, CHESNUT STREET.

Peter Muhlenberg, Collector. John Graff, *Deputy-Collector & Weigher.* Henry Graff, *Deputy Weigher.* William Macpherson, *Naval-Officer.* A. G. Claypoole, *Deputy Naval-Officer.* Wm. Milnor, *Guager.* Wm. Bache, *Surveyor.* John Cooper, *Deputy Surveyor.* Wm. Thackara, *Measurer.* John Henderson & Charles Fleming, *Deputies.* Samuel Young, *Harbour-Master.*

INSPECTORS. Jonas Simonds, Andrew Burkhard, Peter Ozeas, Andrew Jackson, Mathew Hale, David Rose, Isaac Milnor, James Smith, Isaac Roach, Robert Hopkins, Benjamin Lawrence, Frederick Shull, Alexander Boyd, Thomas Cash, John Cress, Benjamin Ashmead, Benjamin Thomas, Robert Jackson, Thomas Procter, John Musser, Joseph Piper, & Alexander Moore.

Hours of transacting business, from 9 A. M. to 3 P. M.

FIG. 8. Port of Philadelphia Custom House. Notice from the Philadelphia directory of 1805.

The great line of wharves along the Delaware River then made up, as before and since, one of the great ports of the world. In the year 1807, just before the Jeffersonian Embargo, there were 699 ship arrivals and 712 clearances.¹¹² Letters from Washington to the Collector touch on the Philadelphia problems, which included the operation of revenue cutters along the coast (the smuggling of lace, silks, gloves, watches and jewelry from France in 1804, for instance, was considered serious), marine hospitals, the registry of ships, the Embargo of 1808, the inspection station at Marcus Hook and the Lazaretto or quarantine station on Tinicum Island.¹¹³

The office in 1819 was moved to the new Custom House on South Second Street [E, V] especially designed for it by architect William Strickland.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁹ Paul A. W. Wallace, *The Muhlenbergs of Pennsylvania*, Phila., Univ. of Pa. Press, 303, 1950, has a short chapter on the General's brief term as Supervisor of U. S. Customs in the District of Pennsylvania.

¹¹⁰ Ralph Wesley Wescott, *The Customs service in Philadelphia, 1789-1934*, 12, 13, Phila., Haddon Craftsmen, 1934, gives some interesting biographical data on these men.

¹¹¹ Scharf and Westcott, 1805.

¹¹² Mease, 53.

¹¹³ Washington, National Archives, Treasury Department Records, *Letters to the Collector, Philadelphia, Pa.* (MS), 1 (1790-1816).

¹¹⁴ A new Customs House was authorized in 1810 and an appropriation made about 1816 but it was not built and

COMMUNITY CENTER

There were other users of Carpenters' Hall and its dependencies which probably took only a single room occasionally. The Company's account book¹¹⁵ lists the following between the years 1806-1839:

Captains' Society
Harmony Fire Company¹¹⁶
Caledonian Company¹¹⁷
Bricklayers' Company¹¹⁸
Hatters Company
Coopers' Company
Pilots' Company¹¹⁹
Philadelphia Hose Company¹²⁰
Magdalen Society¹²¹
Cabinet Makers' Company
Prison Society¹²²
Philadelphia Beneficial Society
Master Mechanics' Society

occupied until July 12, 1819. This structure, which stood on Second Street below Dock, was demolished many years ago.

¹¹⁵ *Treasurer's Book, 1794-1839*, MS, CC Library. The minutes of a meeting held December 23, 1795, record a rate of twenty shillings per night "except those who meet upon Charitable Causes such as Fire Compy, Sea Captains Club, Colodonian Society. . . ." *Committee of Seven's Minutes*, MS, CC Library.

¹¹⁶ The Harmony Fire Company was founded in 1784 and made up of Quakers. In 1793 the company moved from the Negro schoolhouse on Willings Alley to the Carpenters' Company building on the west side of Carpenters' Court. Thompson Westcott, *History of the Philadelphia Fire Department* (Hist. Soc. Penna., book of clippings published 1849-1851, Articles 19-21).

¹¹⁷ "Instituted 1790. All the members must be Scotchmen, or their offspring; at least thirty years of age, and not above forty years . . . these visitors attend to the sick. . . ." Mease, 234.

¹¹⁸ "Incorporated, 1809. It was instituted upon the plan of the Stone Cutters' Society; as a benefit association, and to measure work. Besides the usual officers, there are twelve measurers of work." Mease, 271, 272. The organization existed as early as 1801 when it was testified that Benjamin Taylor was "worthy President of our honorable Company of Bricklayers." *Robbery of the Bank of Pennsylvania in 1798*, 66, Phila., 1802. The organization is still in existence.

¹¹⁹ "A Society for the benefit of 'decayed pilots, their widows and children,' was formed in the year 1788, and incorporated in the year 1789. Its affairs are managed by twelve members, chosen from Philadelphia, Cape Henlopen, and Cape May. . . ." Mease, 270.

¹²⁰ The Philadelphia Hose Company was founded in 1803, had a hose carriage designed by Patrick Lyon and performed its first conspicuous service at the fire which burned Israel Israel's stable in Hudson's Alley. (Westcott, Articles No. 49-54.)

¹²¹ "Was instituted in the year 1800. Its objects are 'to aid in restoring to the paths of virtue; to be instrumental in recovering to honest rank in life, those unhappy females, who have been robbed of their innocence and are desirous of returning to a life of rectitude.'" Mease, 245.

¹²² "Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons. . . . This Society was formed in the year 1787 and was proposed by an active citizen in the cause of the reformation of the penal code, in order to alleviate some of the miseries attendant thereon. . . . President—William White, D.D." Mease, 243, 244.

Fame Fire Company¹²³
 First Marine Bible Association
 Vaccine Society¹²⁴
 New England Society
 Hibernian Society¹²⁵
 Plasterers' Society
 Fire Association
 Pennsylvania Peace Society
 Board of Managers of the House of Refuge
 Directors of Public Schools

The present writer has not yet ascertained how many of the above met in the old Hall and how many in the later structures built by the Company on the same lot.

Early in the spring of 1809, during excavation for a new brick warehouse building on Hudson's Alley, the made ground on the east side of Carpenters' Court caved away and for a time threatened the Hall itself. Twenty to forty cartloads of earth, reaching back to within two feet of the old building, slid into the hole. The masons rushed their work and completed a stout wall just before a tremendous rain broke. "Mercy preserved it," wrote the owner of the new building.¹²⁶

Various minutes of the Managing Committee give details about the Hall in this period. Protection was provided by the customary fire buckets, probably of the familiar leather type, of which eleven were repaired (1812). The roof had leaky gutters and spouts needing cleaning (1812). These were repaired, but in 1817 Jacob Carman was paid \$555 for replacing the shingles with slate. The new roof had copper gutters (1818). Wood was ordered by the cord for the fireplaces, one of which was fitted with a set of "back & jambs" (1812). There was also an old "open stove" (1815). Fees were paid chimney sweeps for keeping the flues clean. The interior was painted and whitewashed (1815) as was usual. Candles were still used to light the interior, though a patent lamp was purchased to light the front entry (1813).

Another important institution to use Carpenters' Hall was the Second Bank of the United States. This bank, for which a plan had been submitted by Secretary of

the Treasury Dallas in 1814, was meant to stabilize finances of the country in chaos following the War of 1812. It was established by Congress in 1816 and Captain William Jones, the naval hero, was the President of the new institution, which was capitalized at 35 million dollars, and opened for business in January of 1817.¹²⁷ Until 1821 the bank rented space here, waiting for the completion of its new Greek temple on Chestnut Street a block west [C, IV].¹²⁸

After the bank moved out the Hall was rented for many purposes. On February 23, 1821, the Philadelphia College of Pharmacy was organized here,¹²⁹ the first institution of its kind in the world.¹³⁰ Such diverse groups as the Fuel Saving Society and the Society for the Education of Female Children were in the Hall in 1822.¹³¹ The first floor had the Musical Fund Society for over three years.¹³² The Hicksite Friends¹³³ followed with Sunday meetings and for most of ten years Johnny Willetts "the peculiar and well-remembered schoolmaster" held his classes on the second floor.¹³⁴ The Apprentice's Library shared this space with him for over seven years.¹³⁵ The cellar was rented to Jedediah Allen¹³⁶ and then to Gillen and Hill.¹³⁷

Another notable institution here was the Franklin Institute, chartered for "the promotion and encouragement of manufactures and the mechanic and useful arts." The new society needed a place to meet and install its library, cabinet of minerals, and models of architectural and mechanical interest. Carpenters' Hall was rented

¹²⁷ Scharf and Westcott, 2094.

¹²⁸ *AICC*, 32, 33. Oct. 1, 1816-Feb. 9, 1821 are elsewhere given as the dates of occupancy. *CC*, 63. The rent paid the Carpenters' Company was \$1600 per annum.

The new bank building, still standing at 420 Chestnut Street, usually called "the Old Custom House," has been preserved as an historic monument under the care of the National Park Service since 1938.

¹²⁹ James J. Levick, Daniel B. Smith, *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 7: 310n., 1883.

¹³⁰ A. Margareta Archambault, *A guide book of art, architecture and historic interests in Pennsylvania*, Phila., Winston, 17, 1924.

¹³¹ *CC*, 60.

¹³² Mar. 12, 1821-Dec. 12, 1824. *Ibid.*, 63.

"The Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia was established February 29, 1820. It embraced professors of music and amateur members . . . the Society finding the room first selected . . . too small, took the Carpenters' Company Hall. . . . The practicings were held regularly on the first and third Thursdays of the month, and on the intervening Thursday evenings there were private vocal rehearsals, to which performing members only were admitted.

"The objects of the Society were, first, to cultivate and diffuse a musical taste; and secondly, to afford relief to its necessitous professional members and their families." William L. Mactier, *A sketch of the Musical Fund Society of Philadelphia*, 7, 8, Phila., 1885.

¹³³ June 1, 1827-Mar. 1, 1828. *CC*.

¹³⁴ Dec. 26, 1822-Dec. 16, 1824, and Mar. 16, 1826-Dec. 31, 1832. *Ibid.* Watson 1: 419; 3: 280.

¹³⁵ Mar. 12, 1821-Sept. 12, 1828. *CC*, 63.

¹³⁶ Nov. 15, 1824-Feb. 15, 1826. *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ Nov. 9, 1826-Aug. 9, 1828. *Ibid.*

¹²³ The Fame Fire Company was originally "Queen Charlotte's Fire Company" organized 1764. The name was changed in 1782, the first being "too royalist." (Westcott, Articles 83-85.)

¹²⁴ "Society for Promoting Vaccination among the Poor. On the 10th of March, 1809, a number of persons had a meeting . . . to consider the expediency of establishing a society. . . . The association is encouraged to persevere in its labours, having already had about three thousand persons vaccinated." Mease, 343, 344.

¹²⁵ "Was instituted about the year 1792, for the purpose of protecting Irish emigrants from the cruelty and tyrannical conduct of masters and owners of vessels employed in the passenger trade." Mease, 281, 282.

¹²⁶ *Diary of Arthur Howell*, MS in possession of Mrs. Francis D. Brinton, West Chester, Pa. The building, meant for the storage of hides, three stories high, was built by Daniel Groves, mason, and James Widdowfield, carpenter.

for five hundred dollars per annum and here was held the first exhibition of American manufactures in October of 1824.

It was quite successful. Three hundred exhibits from manufacturers as far away as Maine and Ohio were shown and medals were awarded for such diverse products as blister steel and grass bonnets, japanned goods and broad cloths, camel's hair brushes, a base drum, and a printing of Wilson's *Ornithology*. The Institute was not content with merely showing what was casually brought in; it offered premiums as a challenge to the inventors of the new Industrial Age. In 1825, for instance, gold medals were held out for new and improved processes and products of the coal and iron industries. Silver medals for chemicals, paint pigments, cut glass, cheap broadcloth, pianos, vegetable oil, and other things. Bronzed medals for pottery, carpeting, buckskin gloves, a substitute for copper ships' sheathing and the largest quantity of Pennsylvania firebrick equal to imported makes and burned during the year.

Some of the meetings of the Institute were held at Carpenters' Hall before their new building on Seventh Street was occupied in 1826 [A, III].¹³⁸

The longest tenancy of record was the last one—that of Charles J. and Frederick Wolbert who occupied a part of the building in 1828 as auction rooms—and all of it in 1838 (fig. 9). An advertisement in the *Public Ledger* gives an idea of their business:

C. J. WOLBERT & CO., Auctioneers,

AUCTION MART

CARPENTER'S COURT, CHESNUT STREET,

between Third and Fourth

FANCY GOODS

CARD.—Our sale of Fancy Goods at the Auction Mart, will be continued on Friday evening, commencing at 7 o'clock.

FANCY GOODS

Closing Sales for the Season

THIS AND TOMORROW EVENINGS.

The 27th and 28th insts., at the Auction Mart, in Carpenters' Court, commencing at 7 o'clock, a large and general assortment of Fancy Goods, London fine gold Jewelry, Paintings, &c.

May be examined all to-day.¹³⁹

The Wolberts seemed to have caused the Company and the other tenants of Carpenters' Court much unhappi-

¹³⁸ Thomas Coulson, *The Franklin Institute from 1824 to 1949*, Jour. Franklin Institute, 1-8, Jan., 1950. *First annual report of the proceedings of the Franklin Institute*, Phila., 1825.

¹³⁹ *Public Ledger*, Dec. 27, 1850.



FIG. 9. Interior, 1848. Drawn by Benjamin Lossing while the Hall served as an auction house.

ness.¹⁴⁰ They were finally evicted in 1857 with difficulty.¹⁴¹

A NATIONAL SHRINE

From an early date Carpenters' Hall was set apart from its contemporaries. The *Columbian Magazine* for January, 1790, in describing the leading Philadelphia structures of that day, thought that

This edifice, though more humble in its architecture and less conspicuous in its situation, than some of the others, is, nevertheless, rendered famous, by being the place in which that august body,—the first general Congress of America, assembled and held their councils.

The Hall thus had a special status (to writers at least) because of its historic associations. An unnamed but eloquent reporter from Virginia in 1829 felt its utilitarian uses highly improper.

I write this from the celebrated Carpenters' Hall, a structure that will ever be deemed *sacred* while national liberty is cherished on earth. . . . Above are the committee rooms, now occupied by a very polite schoolmaster, who kindly gave me permission to inspect them. Yes! These sublime apartments, which first resounded with the indignant murmur of our immortal ancestors, sitting in secret consultation upon the wrongs of their countrymen, now ring with the din of urchins conning over their tasks; and the hallowed hall below, in which the august assembly to which they belonged daily convened, is now devoted to the use of an auctioneer! Even now, while I am penning these lines at his desk, his voice stuns my ear and distracts my brain, crying "how much for these rush-bottom chairs? I am offered \$5—nobody more?—going! going!! gone!!!" In fact the hall is lumbered up with beds, looking glasses, chairs, tables, pictures, ready made clothes, and all the trash and trumpery which usually grace the premises of a knight of the hammer. I must do him the justice, however, to say, that he very readily granted me the privilege I am now enjoying when he

¹⁴⁰ The Minutes of the Managing Committee for July 29, 1830, record that: "Complaints having been received from some of the tenants in the Court that C. J. Wolbert makes use of the Court & yard back for the purpose of selling horses & carriages—It was on motion Resolved that Jesse Williamson & C. Stevenson be appointed to wait on him & inform him he must discontinue it in future—"

¹⁴¹ *AICC*, 35. Watson 3: 278; CC, 60. A Wolbert auction handbill of 1852 is reproduced in Jackson, *Encyclopedia*, 377.



FIG. 10. Interior of Hall after Restoration. Central heating, tile floor, gas-light chandeliers and a frescoed ceiling are included. Carpenters' Company Library.



FIG. 11. Exterior of Hall after Restoration. The landscape background is an imaginary work by the artist of this "photocollotype." Carpenters' Company Library.

understood my purpose. The building, it is gratifying to add, still belongs to the Society of Carpenters, who will by no means part with it, or consent to any alteration.¹⁴²

The historian Benson J. Lossing, visiting the sites made famous by the Revolution, indulged in some fine Victorian eloquence. On November 27, 1848, he wrote:

On Monday morning I visited Carpenters' Hall, the building in which the first Continental Congress held its brief session. Having had no intimation concerning its appearance, condition, and present use, and informed that it was situated in "Carpenters' Court," imagination had invested its exterior with dignity, its interior with solemn grandeur, and its location a spacious area, where nothing common or unclean was permitted to dwell. How often the hoof of Pegasus touches the leafless tree-tops of sober prose when his rider supposes him to be at his highest altitude! How often the rainbow of imagination fades, and leaves to the eye nothing but the forbidding aspect of a cloud of plain reality! So at this time. The spacious court was but a short narrow alley; and the Hall, consecrated by the holiest associations which cluster around the birthtime of our republic, was a small two-story building, of somber aspect, with a short steeple, and all of a dingy hue. I tried hard to conceive the apparition upon its front to be a classic frieze, with rich historic triglyphs; but it would not do. Vision was too "lynx-eyed," and I could make nothing more poetic of it than an array of impudent letters spelling the words,

C. J. WOLBERT & CO. AUCTIONEERS
FOR THE SALE OF
REAL ESTATE AND STOCKS,
FANCY GOODS,
HORSES, VEHICLES, AND HARNESS.

What a desecration! Covering the facade of the very Temple of Freedom, with placards of groveling mammon! If sensibility is shocked with this outward pollution, it is overwhelmed with indignant shame on entering the hall where that august assembly of men—the godfathers of our republic—convened to stand as sponsors at the baptism of infant American Liberty, to find it filled with every species of merchandise, and the walls which once echoed the eloquent words of Henry, Lee and the Adamses, reverberating with the clatter of the auctioneer's voice and hammer. Is there not patriotism strong enough and bold enough in Philadelphia to enter this temple and "cast out all them that buy and sell and overthrow the table of the money-changers?"

The hall in which Congress met is upon the lower floor, and comprehends the whole area of the building. It is about forty-five feet square, with a recess in the rear twenty-five feet wide eighteen feet high. The second story contains smaller apartments which were used by Congress, and occupied by the society as committee rooms. In one of these, emptied of all merchandise except a wash-tub and a rush-bottomed chair, let us sit down and consider the events connected with the first great Continental Council.¹⁴³

Within the Company, however, there seems to have been a growing appreciation of the historical importance of the building and several attempts were made to get back into the Hall, which had been rented to others since

1791.¹⁴⁴ Action finally came at the meeting of January 21, 1856, when it was

Resolved that the Managing Committee be directed to inquire into the expediency of removing to the Old Hall and of renting of the premises now occupied by the Company and the difference of the rental. . . .¹⁴⁵

On March 26 a favorable report was made¹⁴⁶ and on April 28 the Company resolved to renovate the building, "especial care to be taken to preserve, as much as possible, every feature in said Hall as it now exists indicative of its original finish."¹⁴⁷ On October 15 a special committee was appointed "to take into Consideration the Best Mode of Fitting up the Old Hall."¹⁴⁸

After considerable negotiation possession of the building was gained from auctioneer Wolbert. The workmen began the refurbishment on May 25, 1857. On the first floor a partition was run across the columns on the south side of the main room to provide space for the Warden's use (fig. 10). On the second floor several partitions were added to make living quarters for a custodian. These included three "chambers," a parlour, and a kitchen. The west room was left undivided to serve as a committee room and library, and for the latter purpose was fitted up with shelves. A "gravel mortar" floor, a well, and a new furnace were planned for the basement. The stairway repaired and the treads protected by cast iron plates, but the remainder was to be untouched "except such patches as may be positively necessary."¹⁴⁹

On the exterior of the building gutters were added to the roof, the woodwork painted and sanded and gas "candelabras or lamps" placed flanking the entrance steps. The backyard was laid out as a garden and the walks paved (fig. 11). Work progressed quickly. By July 25 the caretaker's family had moved in and on the twenty-ninth the Managing Committee met in the building—the first Carpenters' Company meeting in the Hall for about sixty-six years.

Considerable pains were spent on furnishing the meeting rooms. The large downstairs room was papered and lighted with three pendant gaslight fixtures. A painted motto, executed by Collins West, recalled the historic meeting of the Continental Congress.

Within these walls, Henry, Hancock and Adams inspired the Delegates of the Colonies with nerve & sinew for the toils of War resulting in our National Independence.

Six new settees were ordered from William Sanderson and, after agreeing to purchase two umbrella stands, an

¹⁴⁴ MSC, Preliminary statement.

¹⁴⁵ MCC.

¹⁴⁶ MMCCC.

¹⁴⁷ AICC, 35.

¹⁴⁸ MMCCC.

¹⁴⁹ MSC, May 21, 25, 1857. The well was abandoned before completion.

¹⁴² Watson 1: 419.

¹⁴³ Lossing 2: 57, 58.

ice cooler, and a dozen spittons, the subcommittee for "refitting the Old Hall" requested to be discharged.¹⁵⁰ At a general meeting on September 5, 1857, the building as repaired and restored was delivered up to the Company and "an Elaborate Historical Reminiscence," specially prepared for the occasion, was read.¹⁵¹

The opening of Carpenters' Hall as an historic shrine seems to have attracted public attention and provoked the City into an attempt to buy the building. The following exchange of letters indicates the feeling of the times.

Department of City Property
Office, Second Story, Girard
Bank north side
Phila Jan 17 1859

To the Carpenters Association
of the City of Philadelphia
Owning Carpenters Hall
Gentlemen

I have been instructed by the Committee on City Property through councils to ask of your body whether or no you would be willing to convey to the City your proud Monument of Revolutionary memory, or in other words Carpenters Hall, and, if so to state the price or remuneration you would require for the same. That it is now in worthy hands and while so will be held sacred to the memory of those who were so signally instrumental in achieving American Independence none I presume would have the hardihood to question. Yet there are those who think Carpenters like Independence Hall should be vested in the City, hence this communication. He pleased therefor to forward to this office at an early day Consistent with your convenience the information thus respectfully desired and oblige.

Very truly & Respectly
Your Obedient Servant
Signed P. M. Christopher

The offer may have been expected, for at the annual meeting of the Company, held the same day, the subject

¹⁵⁰ The sub-committee consisted of L. R. Knight, James Hutchinson and Michael Erickson. The whole program is summed up in MSC as follows:

<i>Amount of Expenses in fitting up and Furnishing Carpenters Hall—Sept 1858</i>			
<i>Fitting up</i>		<i>Furnishings</i>	
Carpenter work	\$ 400.00	Carpenter work	\$ 78.13
Lumber	152.69	New Tables (Hall)	67.81
Laboring work &c	88.26	Laboring work	29.42
Hardware	46.54	Painting Bookcases	8.50
Blacksmith work	6.00	Painting Banner	24.50
Painting inside & out	562.74	Painting Motto	16.60
Iron plates on stairs	44.04	Carpets & Matting	281.75
Repairs to Slate roof	35.98	putting down ditto	39.71
Plastering	104.00	Gas fixtures	261.25
Tin work	54.72	Iron safe	200.00
Papering	294.24	Settees & chairs	87.50
Repairing locks &c	17.31		
Marble Mantal shelf	6.62		\$1095.17
Granite steps back door	46.00		2887.92
Plumbing Wright,			
Hunter & Co.	418.78		
Furnace &c	180.00		
Brick & work	430.00		
	<u>\$2887.92</u>	Total	<u>\$3983.09</u>

¹⁵¹ MCC, Sept. 5, 1857.

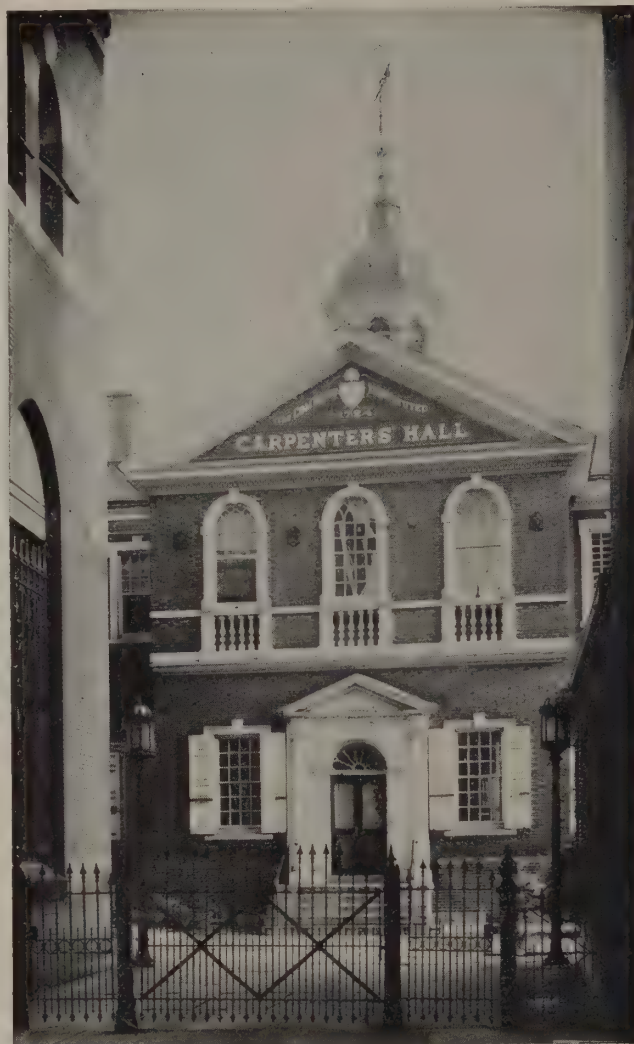


FIG. 12. North Front Today. The Hall still heads Carpenters' Court flanked by other structures. Photo by Peterson, U. S. Natl. Park Service.

was brought up for discussion and the following resolution was passed:

That while this Company fully appreciate the patriotic motives that have induced the City Councils to make the enquiry presented in the communication just read, yet we cannot under any circumstances receive favourably any propositions involving the sale of Carpenters Hall. We in common with our fellow citizens venerate it not only for its associations with the stirring events of the Revolution "But we also hold it as a sacred trust committed to us by our predecessors, which nothing shall ever induce us to part with" Also that having fitted up the Room Occupied by the first Congress as near as possible as it was originally finished we intend as heretofore to keep it open for the inspection of all who may wish to visit it.

When on motion it was unanimously resolved that a copy of the foregoing Resolution signed by the President and Secretary be forwarded to the Commissioner of City property and the same adopted.

The subject did not come up again.

In its later years the Hall was the scene of several special occasions. Three days after Fort Sumter was fired on, the Carpenters' Company resolved to erect a flagstaff on the front pediment to display a Union Flag "so long as the present exciting times continue." At a special meeting April 24, 1861, the flag was unfurled and a chorus of young ladies sang the *Star Spangled Banner*.¹⁵² A call for volunteers was made, as the record shows:

Resolved, That those of us who are able and willing do form ourselves into a volunteer Company to be known as the "Carpenters Company" to be attached to the Home Guard of the City of Philadelphia, and to be used in such service, either mechanical or military as may be deemed we can be made the most useful, and that the names of such members be entered upon the minutes of the Company,

Resolved, That suitable persons of the trade (outside of this Company) be invited to join with us in a sufficient number to make not exceeding in all one hundred, and that the free use and privilege of this our venerated Hall be granted as an armory.¹⁵³

On September 5, 1874, the one hundredth anniversary of the first Continental Congress was held. A ceremony attended by U. S. Vice-President Wilson, several members of Congress and other notables featured an eloquent address by a Henry A. Brown as "Orator of the Day." The Hall proved to be a great attraction to Philadelphia visitors during the Centennial Exposition of 1876. Seventy thousand copies of the booklet *Carpenters' Hall and Its Historic Memories* by Richard K. Betts were given away at that time.¹⁵⁴

The two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Carpenters' Company and the one hundred and fiftieth of the first Continental Congress were recognized by a two-day celebration held at Philadelphia and Valley Forge on September 25-26, 1924.¹⁵⁵

For nearly a century now the Hall has continued open to the public and maintained at the expense of the Carpenters' Company, a pioneer work of preservation in this country (fig. 12). While it is difficult to set up priorities, it may be that Carpenters' Hall was the second building in the United States to be set aside as an "historic shrine." Washington's headquarters (the Hasbrouck House) at Newburgh, New York, was so designated by the State of New York in 1850 and is generally considered the first example. It would appear that the dedication of Washington's Mount Vernon estate in Virginia came a few years later than Carpenters' Hall.

Plans for the improvement of the neighborhood are of fairly recent date. In 1933 there was considered a project called the "Curtis Mall" which would have con-

nected Carpenters' Hall to Independence Square on the west and to the first Bank of the United States on the east, but this did not mature.¹⁵⁶ Again, in 1935, a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives which, if enacted, would have set up the Carpenters' Hall National Monument under the United States National Park Service. This was intended to clear and "park" the land between Carpenters' Court and Fourth Street.¹⁵⁷ While neither of these projects eventuated, they probably encouraged the beginnings of the current project, which will accomplish these objectives on a much larger scale.

Congress in 1948 created the Independence National Historical Park Project and the following year appropriated funds for the beginning of land acquisition. The principal area—known as "Project A"—extends from Fifth to Second and Chestnut to Walnut Streets, thereby including Carpenters' Hall. Two years later a contract between the Carpenters' Company and the United States Department of the Interior was approved. Under the terms of this instrument the Company keeps its Hall but certain cooperative measures are authorized, which, it is hoped, will guarantee its future as a public shrine of first-rate historical importance.

CARPENTERS' COURT

The lot on Chestnut Street acquired by the Carpenters' Company for building their Hall had originally been patented by David Breintnall as early as 1688.¹⁵⁸ Of the "several buildings and other improvements" on it at the time of purchase only the "front house"—probably a residence on the street built by the Breintnalls or the Emlens—and an old well¹⁵⁹ are identified in the records. The house was immediately repaired and improved for the rent it would bring.

Soon after acquisition the Company voted to dispose of a third of the Chestnut Street frontage—a building site 26' × 140' on the east side of the lot¹⁶⁰—and sold it to Joseph Pemberton in 1775.¹⁶¹ It would appear from this and subsequent developments that the Hall was always planned to head up a narrow court with flanking buildings as rent-payers. At any rate, it was not conceived of as a conspicuous free-standing architectural landmark.

The placing of buildings in the heart of a city block—more or less secluded from view and the noise and dust of the streets—was a common enough practice in Phila-

¹⁵⁶ Preliminary sketches were prepared by Thalheimer and Weitz, Philadelphia architects.

¹⁵⁷ H. R. 8268, 74th Congress, 1st Session. Introduced by Mr. Daley, May 29, 1935, and referred to the Committee on Public Lands.

¹⁵⁸ CC, 55.

¹⁵⁹ AICC, 6.

¹⁶⁰ CC, 37.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁵² Scharf and Westcott 1: 762.

¹⁵³ Forty-four men volunteered at this meeting.

¹⁵⁴ Watson 3: 281.

¹⁵⁵ *Recording the celebration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the institution of the Carpenters' Company, etc., n.a., Phila., Carpenters' Co., 1925.*

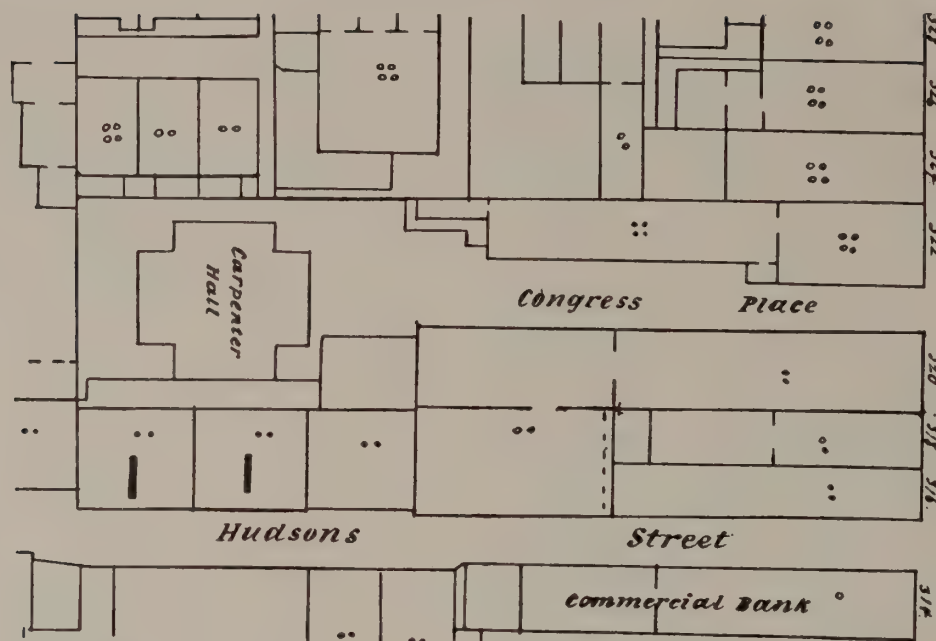


FIG. 13. Portion of Hexamer and Locher Map, 1860. Every available site is now crowded with buildings. (West to the top.)

delphia, as in London. The size of the original blocks or squares of the city was so great that owners found that the only way of fully exploiting their lots was to open small streets, "courts" and footways to develop the interior areas. The practical Dr. Franklin was doing this at the time on his own property just across Chestnut Street. Something similar had been done in the case of St. Joseph's Church in the block to the south. Because of the uncompromising uniformity and rigidity of the original checkerboard layout of Philadelphia streets, and the plainness of the private house fronts, the informal development of courtyards and interior passages provided welcome touches of the picturesque. The lane back to the Hall was soon developed with other buildings and it is shown on contemporary maps. The Lukens Survey (1785) has it designated as "Carpenters' Hall Alley," the Hexamer and Locher Atlas (1860) (fig. 13), "Congress Place." Mostly it is called simply "Carpenters' Court."

Of the number of structures built on the lot at different times by the Carpenters' Company, the writer has not been able to identify all completely. It will probably not be possible to untangle the matter until the Company manuscripts have been transcribed and the welter of detailed information rearranged systematically. The few notes included here will serve to provide a general idea of the layout in different periods.

Building A ("The Front House") Remodeled 1768, 69

As mentioned above, this was built on the lot by a previous owner. Work of remodeling and repairing was begun on this building soon after purchase and be-

fore the Hall itself was started.¹⁶² There is no description of its appearance, but we know that nine double-hung windows were installed at the time, probably replacing old-fashioned casements. An antiquarian sketch (fig. 14) shows it as a two-story frame house.

The building was used for a Company meeting on January 30, 1770¹⁶³ but for the most part it was rented out for income. One William Jones lived in it in the period 1778-1780 and paid a rental of £54 yearly.¹⁶⁴ It was finally pulled down in 1810 to make room for a new four-story structure.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶² Specific mentions are:

William Anderson, Cr.

Nov. 21	"By work done in the front House"	10:10:0
1768		

James Graisbury, Cr.

Jan. 1771	"By Carpenters work at the front House"	4:12:0
	By 10 days work at the Hall"	2:10:0

Other items which probably refer to this building are:

Benjamin Randolph, Cr.

Feb. 22	"By Boards Scantline &c"	12:10:1-1/2
1769		

James Pearson, Cr.

April 6	"To the remainder of his Acct for work and Materials at the Hall"	36:18:0
1769		

James Potter, Cr.

1769	"By hanging 9 Windows double with boxed pullies & parting Strips"	4:12:3
------	---	--------

These sheets (CCAM) are bound in the back of an old volume in the CC Library.

¹⁶³ *Warden's Book*, 12.

¹⁶⁴ *Warden's Book*, 117, 137, 152.

¹⁶⁵ There was an accounting of funds for this on April 16, 1812. *ACM*.



FIG. 14. The "Front House" on Chestnut Street in 1809. Reconstruction by Evans shows (left) frame house built on Carpenters' Court before 1768. Hist. Soc. of Penna.

Buildings B

These buildings must have been dependencies to the Front House. The first Warden's Book shows that on April 30, 1781, that Company authorized the "Committee of rents to do or cause such repairs to be done to the back houses in the tenure of John Lort and Ann Anderson as is necessary to preserve the houses from Damage and to make them Tenable. . . ." ¹⁶⁶ One set of accounts shows that William Anderson rented space from 1768 to 1782. ¹⁶⁷ He was not a member of the Company, but was possibly the Philadelphia plasterer of that name. John Lort, Jr., was a member elected in 1773 and who died in 1794. On October 8, 1781, Bedford & Lort billed the Company for "4 Dormer window cheeks Shingled" and for "18 days work at the 3d. Tenement." ¹⁶⁸

Building C (Storehouse)

On April 16, 1770, the Carpenters' Company met "at the Store House on their own Lott" ¹⁶⁹ and the same year they were billed £6/4/0 for work by William Robinson "at the Storehouse." ¹⁷⁰ This may have been a temporary building for the storage of tools and construction materials.

Building D (A Necessary)

Abraham Carlile built a vaulted "necessary" and submitted a bill in January or February of 1771. ¹⁷¹ There are many references to privies during later years; doubtless there were a number of them.

Building E (A Kitchen)

On February 11, 1771, there are two items from James Worrell's accounts that refer to a kitchen:

¹⁶⁶ *Warden's Book*, 162.

¹⁶⁷ *CCAM*, 9.

¹⁶⁸ *CCAM*, 13.

¹⁶⁹ *Warden's Book*, 1769-1781, 18.

¹⁷⁰ *CCAM*.

¹⁷¹ *ACM*, Accounts of James Worrell.

to 8 Days work my Self at work in the Kechen 3:0:0
24 Sash Lights 9 by 11 painting & glasing the
Seller windows in ye Kechen 1:4:2 ¹⁷²

It is likely that the kitchen was identical with one of the structures listed here as "Buildings B."

Building F (Second Meeting Hall) Built 1791

When the original Hall was rented to the United States Bank in 1791 the Company decided to put up a new headquarters on the west side of the court. ¹⁷³ This structure was completed and occupied the same year. An insurance survey (see Appendix IV) describes the new building as 19'-8" deep and running 61' along the court, two stories high, with three rooms to a floor. The whole was valued at £200. In 1801 it was described as "a convenient Brick building" with a fireplace in each of the first floor rooms and a cellar 18' x 35'. ¹⁷⁴ In 1833 the building was raised from two to three stories. ¹⁷⁵

General Henry Knox, renting space for the new United States War Department, was one of the first occupants of "the new apartments." Just which meetings were held in this structure and which ones in the older Hall the writer has not yet been able to work out. It is possible that parts of this structure may survive in the brick walls of the present building. ¹⁷⁶

Building G (Before 1801)

Described as "a Brick Tenement 22 feet in front by 13 feet deep Two stories high, a good Garret and Cellar, with a fire place therein." This was probably the small house shown on the east side of the court in early photographs.

Building H ("The Front Store") Built 1810-1811 (still existing?)

About 1810-1811 the old "Front House" (Building A) was taken down and a new one erected at the corner of Chestnut Street and Carpenters' Court at a total cost of \$9,213.19-1/2. ¹⁷⁷ The new structure was described in an insurance survey of April, 1811, when it was valued at two thousand dollars. The front part was four stories high with "a neat arch head venetian door with fan and Side lights" on Chestnut Street. A large room finished with bookshelves occupied the whole area and opened into a sort of mezzanine at the second level. The third and fourth floors were in one room each, 26' x 44", evidently intended as meeting rooms.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*

¹⁷³ *AICC*, 55, 63.

¹⁷⁴ George Ingels, President, to, Philadelphia, Sept. 18, 1801. *ACM*.

¹⁷⁵ For the resurvey by John C. Evans, see Appendix IV.

¹⁷⁶ *CCAM*, 27. It appears that the Department was in the old Hall July 1-Nov. 19, 1791, and in the new building until the end of the year.

¹⁷⁷ *ACM*, "Examination of the accounts of the Building Committee, etc." There is also a small MS minute book for 1810-1811 kept by this committee in the CC Library.

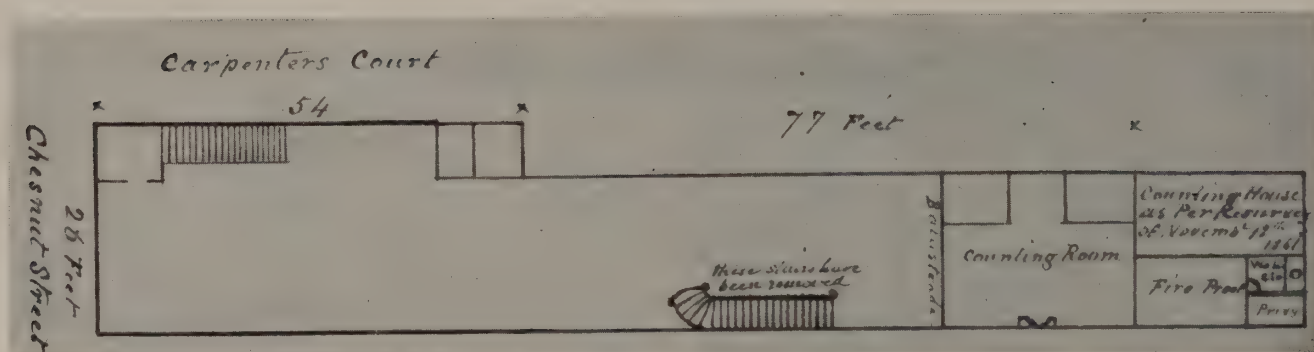


FIG. 15. West Building, 1861. Within its outlines are contained remnants of several earlier structures.

In 1812 the "front store," as it was called in the Company's records, was leased to Professor Nicholas G. Dufief,¹⁷⁸ proprietor of "The Universal Bookstore" listed at No. 118 Chestnut Street in the city directories. Dufief sublet other parts of the building, and among his tenants he secured the young Athenaeum of Philadelphia, which moved in late in April, 1817, and remained for a year. The Athenaeum was a popular literary and social organization which maintained reading rooms, especially for periodicals.¹⁷⁹ There were other rooms in this or the next building let for offices¹⁸⁰ and the basement was used as a paint shop.¹⁸¹

The Chestnut Street "panoramas" published by Julio Rae illustrate this building in 1850 as No. 118 occupied by Hart, Montgomery & Co., dealers in paperhangings. The ground floor front had by then been modernized. The whole complex, further remodelled, is probably what was surveyed for insurance in 1861 by D. R. Knight. The three buildings then lining the west side of the court had reached a length of over 150 feet, approximately what they are today (fig. 15).

The present building is in need of archaeological study to see how much of the older buildings are contained within the fabric. It is a very interesting fact that the inside wall of the basement on Chestnut Street shows the lower part of a doorway well below the sidewalk level

indicating that Chestnut Street (it once descended to Dock Creek east of the Hall) has been filled in some six feet.

Building I ("The Back Building,") Built 1810-1811

Somewhat smaller (19'-6" × 27') and three stories high, this building joined "Building H" immediately to the south, and it, in turn, communicated with "Building E." It was entered by another Venetian door and its stairway gave access to one office each on the upper floors.

Further search and analysis of data from various sources may make possible a complete picture of the development of this property. We know that it was fenced in 1771¹⁸² and that there was still a fence there in 1796.¹⁸³ The court or alley was paved before 1793,¹⁸⁴ and used as a service driveway. Gravel was spread about the Hall in 1807¹⁸⁵ and flagstones and brick paving in 1843.¹⁸⁶

The supply of water in the court is referred to on many occasions. The old well on the property when purchased was fitted with a new pump with an iron chamber.¹⁸⁷ This was apparently so successful that by August 1, 1774, it was in general used by the neighbors and the Company planned to charge six shillings per year "water money" for each family able to pay.¹⁸⁸ By

¹⁷⁸ *Minutes of the Managing Committee (MMC)* MS, CC Library, June 29, 1812.

¹⁷⁹ The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, founded in 1813, incorporated 1815 and still active today. It had occupied the second floor rooms of bookseller Anthony Finley at the southwest corner of Fourth and Chestnut Streets, but was asked to move when the building was taken over by publisher Mathew Carey in 1817. John Bunting was paid \$56.50 for carpenter work in preparing the new quarters over the Front Store. Rent was \$200 per year, payable quarterly. When the Athenaeum eventually moved, it was to quarters in Philosophical Hall. *Minutes of the Athenaeum/Philadelphia*, MS, The Athenaeum, 156, 172, 177, 178, 201. *The Charter, By-Laws and Seventy-Fifth Annual Report of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia*, n.a., Philadelphia, 3-18, 1890.

¹⁸⁰ For instance, "Bonsall John, conveyancer, office 13 Carpenters Court." In 1837 insurance surveyor Phillip Justus reported that the third floor and part of the fourth were used as a jewelry manufactory.

¹⁸¹ MMC, Oct. 18, 1815.

¹⁸² "to 4-1/2 [days] Scott 4-1/2 Do. Garrot 4-1/2 Nelson working and putting up Fencing a Long the Hall Alley with Sundry other Jobing work at that time." *ACM*. Accounts of James Worrell, Oct. 24, 1771.

¹⁸³ "This Committee being apprehensive that the late rain may have damaged the Fence round the Yard belonging to the Hall request Joseph Morris to attend thereto and have any repairs done that may appear needful." *CSM*, August 9, 1797.

¹⁸⁴ It appears that Chestnut Street was paved or repaired in 1796 and the grades changed enough so that part of the pavement in Carpenters' Court had to be taken up to make a new connection. *CSM*, June 15, 22, and 29, 1796.

¹⁸⁵ MMC, MS, CC Library. July 15, 1807-February 10, 1808.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 25, Nov. 8, 1843.

¹⁸⁷ CC, 39.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 41. In 1714 Councils took steps to encourage the erection of pumps by permitting the person putting in the pump to charge water rent to his neighbors, provided he kept the pump in repair. A. A. Cairns, *The development of public health work in Philadelphia, Laws, Ordinances and Regulations of the*

1811 there was a cistern and log pipes were led to it.¹⁸⁹ Evidently the pump became too popular for the next year it was

Resolved that a Notice be put on the pump that no person except those occupying the Carpenters Building can be permitted to take water from the pump in Buckets or tubs and that a chain & Lock be put on at Night.¹⁹⁰

By the year 1818 there was a hydrant apparently for "Schuylkill water" under pressure.¹⁹¹

The "back yard" was laid out with walks and shrubbery when the building became a shrine in 1857 and this landscape treatment is indicated in the views of the period. It long ago was paved over with concrete.

APPENDIX I

NOTES ON ROBERT SMITH

*Architect of Carpenters' Hall*¹

The life of Robert Smith is obscure at many points, but it can be reconstructed in outline from various sources.² According to one account he was born about 1722 in Glasgow, Scotland.³ The circumstances of his immigration to America are not known.⁴

The building projects with which Smith was associated in one capacity or another make an impressive list.⁵ It certainly entitles him to be known as one of the most successful architects of eighteenth-century America. A rough chronology follows:

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1752-1754. Smith received eight payments for work on the construction of Christ Church steeple, Philadelphia, a brick and frame structure 190' high.⁶ His friend Owen Biddle, gave him the credit for its design.⁷

1753, Jan. 14. Edward Shippen, member of the Board of Trustees, brought up from Philadelphia Smith's plan for a building for the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University.⁸

1754-1756. Smith supervised the construction of Nassau Hall at Princeton.⁹

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, March 18, 1818.

⁵ One of his first jobs may have been a church. On February 19, 1749, it was agreed that the managers of the new Second Presbyterian Church at Third and Arch Streets should invite "Messrs. Smith and Bedford to undertake the Carpenters Work of the sd. House." It is not unlikely that this was Robert Smith and Gunning Bedford, another member of the Carpenters' Company. (Structure put up 1750-52. John Palmer built the steeple 1754, 5, one of the first three in Philadelphia.)

⁶ D. J. Crownover, *18th century churches in Philadelphia*, thesis, Fine Arts Dept., Univ. of Penna., May, 1952 (typescript, unpaginated). The author's data were largely drawn from manuscript sources.

⁷ Owen Biddle, *The young carpenter's assistant*, 56, Phila., 1810. "... for the justness of its proportions, simplicity and symmetry of its parts is allowed by good judges to be equal if not superior in beauty to any Steeple of the spire kind, either in Europe or America. It was erected in the year 1755 by Robert Smith, who some time after took out the sills of the wooden part which had begun to decay, and replaced them by others. . . ." Biddle's book includes an engraved elevation of the tower and steeple (pl. 44).

⁸ Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker, *Princeton, 1746-1896*, 37, Princeton, Princeton Univ. Press, 1946. The trustees approved on July 22, 1754, "the Plan drawn by Doct. W. Shippen & Mr. Robt. Smith." *Princeton, Minutes of the Trustees* (MS), 40. Hugh Morrison, *Early American architecture*, 555, 556, N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1952, remarks that Nassau Hall "seems to have set the pattern for later college buildings such as Harvard's Hollis Hall (1762-3), University Hall at Brown (1770-71) and Dartmouth Hall (1784-91)."

⁹ Wertenbaker, 38. John B. Landis, *The Old Stone Meeting House, 1757-1832*, Carlisle, Pa., The Cornman Press, 1904 (31 pp., illus.) attributes the First Presbyterian Church of Carlisle to Robert Smith without making a very clear case.

1758, Aug. 5. Contract signed with building committee of the Vestry of Christ Church for the building of St. Peter's Church at Third and Pine Streets. Specifications call for a brick structure 60' x 90' with walls 37' high and a cupola, interior finish not included. The whole to be completed by November 1, 1759, for £2310.¹⁰

1761, Nov. 28. Trustees of Pennsylvania College approve for construction, part of Smith's plan for the "New College." The brick structure 30' x 70', was put up the following year on the Fourth Street property, below Arch Street.¹¹

1763, Jan. 1. Contract with Mary Maddox, widow, to build two three-story brick houses on her Third Street property. The houses were to have 21' front and 40' depth; in the rear, piazzas and two-story kitchens. Also necessities, enclosures and incidental paving. To be completed June 30, 1764, all for £2250.¹²

1764-1765. Built house for Benjamin Franklin, south side of High Street between Third and Fourth Streets. House was of brick, 34' x 34', three stories high, richly finished inside, with kitchen in basement. Smith claimed that the structure was worth up to £780 although "the House has not yet been measured."¹³

1766, Jan. 16. Appointed architect of Third Presbyterian Church, south side of Pine Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Structure was of brick 60' x 80', with galleries. Built 1766-68 and still standing, though much altered.¹⁴

1766-1767. Served as master carpenter on the Philadelphia "Bettering House," Tenth to Eleventh and Spruce to Pine Streets. This was a very large U-shaped brick structure. The east end was an almshouse and west a "house of employment," both two

stories high with an arcaded piazza on the inside. In the center of this unusual layout was a three-story block with a cupola; at the angles, four-story pavilions.¹⁵

1767, Jan. Employed as architect on Zion Lutheran Church, Fourth and Cherry Streets (built 1766-69), called by Samuel Hazard the "largest and finest in North America." Brick wall, 70' x 108', enriched with considerable decoration. Burned 1794, rebuilt 1796.¹⁶

1767, Mar. 21. Order to pay nine shillings to William Warner, another carpenter, for boring the columns of a frontispiece, probably for the house of John Lawrence, recently mayor of Philadelphia.¹⁷

1768, Apr. 18. Plans submitted for Carpenters' Hall (built 1770-74). A two-story cross-shaped brick building with four pediments, 50' each way. The windows are unusually enriched and the whole is crowned by a turret or cupola.

1769, Jan. 31. Presented to the Pennsylvania Assembly a memorial proposing a multiple-span wooden arch covered bridge on stone piers for the Schuylkill River. Certain original features with purported economies were demonstrated in plan and elevation and in a detailed model of one span. The Assembly, however, was not prepared for such a project and the matter was tabled.¹⁸

1769, Feb. 17. Appointed member of an American Philosophical Society committee to erect an observatory for the transit of Venus.¹⁹

1770, Apr. 7. The Corporation of Rhode Island College (now Brown University, Providence) received mail from "the architect of Philadelphia," believed to be Robert Smith.²⁰ The "College Edifice" (now University Hall built 1770-72) was "to be the same plan as that of Princeton [Nassau Hall] built of brick, four stories high, and one hundred and fifty feet long."²¹

1770, April 9. "A Description of the Plan and Elevation of a Hospital . . . for the Reception of mad People" signed by Smith. The plan called for a two

¹⁰ *Christ Church Archives*, Drawer 26. St. Peter's was finished in 1763, except for the pulpit and chancel, at a cost of £4765/19/6-1/2. Smith apparently executed the interior woodwork for an additional fee and was not finally paid until 1771. (C. P. B. Jefferys, *The provincial and revolutionary history of St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 48 (1): 42-47, 1924.)

¹¹ Thomas Harrison Montgomery, *A history of the University of Pennsylvania from its foundation to A. D. 1770*, 356, Phila., Geo. W. Jacobs & Co., 1900. "We are therefore of the Opinion that Workmen should now be agreed to go on in the ensuing Summer with one half of the Buildings contained in the Plan formerly given to us by Mr. Robert Smith, which will be 70 feet long by 30 wide and will have on the Ground Floor two Charity Schools, with a Kitchen and a Dining Room, and in the upper Stories Sixteen Lodging Rooms, with cellar beneath the whole, which, by an Estimate given to us may be executed for £1500. . . ."

¹² Hist. Soc. Penna., *Wallace Papers* (MS) 5: 30.

¹³ Smith to Samuel Rhoads, Philadelphia, March 30, 1767. Amer. Philos. Soc., *Franklin Papers* (MS). The insurance survey by Gunning Bedford dated August 5, 1766, is reproduced in "Franklin & Fires," n.a., 14, Phila., 1906. The whole was insured for £500.

See Edward M. Riley, *The Deborah Franklin correspondence*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 95 (3): 240-242, 1951.

¹⁴ Crownover.

¹⁵ Bridenbaugh, 201. The present writer has been unable to find the source of this attribution. Scharf and Westcott, 1451. Inmates first admitted October, 1767.

¹⁶ Crownover.

¹⁷ Hist. Soc. Penna., *Stauffer Collection* (MS) 5: 437.

¹⁸ Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, in *Stauffer Collection* 5: 437.

¹⁹ The observatory was erected a short time afterwards by James Pearson in the State House Yard (*Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 22 (119): 31, 36, 1884). It was from this wooden structure that the Declaration of Independence was first read on July 8, 1776.

²⁰ *Brown University, John Hay Library, Rhode Island College Miscellaneous Papers, The College to Nicholas Brown*. "The Postage of a Letter from the Architect of Philadelphia" (April 7, 1770).

²¹ Rev. James Manning to Rev. Hezekiah Smith, February 12, 1770.

- story brick structure, 100' long, with a turret or cupola. This was built at Williamsburg, Virginia, as the first American insane asylum and is now known as the Eastern State Hospital.^{21a}
- 1770, Sept.-Oct. Carpenters' Company account books show that two of Smith's men worked on the new Hall. The framing of the floors and the materials and workmanship on the cupola, with two bundles of shingles are mentioned. Total, £33.12.6.²²
- 1771, May 20. Report to vestry on decayed condition of Christ Church steeple resulting from leaks. Repairs began in July and were completed by October. It was a difficult project and the cost ran to £644/2/10.²³
- 1771, June 4. Agreement with Christ Church Vestry to build four houses on their property, north side of Spruce Street between Fourth and Fifth within four years, these to be "4 good brick messuages or tenements at least 2 stories high & with a cellar under the whole & to be of the value of £200 each."²⁴
- 1772, Mar. 18. Proposal to dismantle "the Wooden and Brick Part of the State-house, as low as the Eaves of the House, and to erect a Cupola on the Roof of the Front Building" delivered to the Pennsylvania Assembly. Not approved.²⁵
- 1773 ca. June. Examination of west gallery Christ Church. Reported that columns were strong enough to support organ.²⁶
- 1773-1774. Designed and built Walnut Street prison, s.e. corner Sixth Street. The structure was very large—32' × 184'—and two stories with cupola and with two 90' wings. It was most remarkable for the fact that it was of fireproof construction, the floors being supported on groined brick arches. It was a model institution much studied by visitors from this country and abroad.²⁷
- 1774, June 25. Appointed one of five Philadelphia "Regulators of Party Walls, Buildings and Partition Fences."²⁸

^{21a} Richmond, Virginia State Library, *Minutes of the Eastern State Hospital* (MS). The contract dated Jan. 18, 1771 to erect this structure was signed by Carpenter Benjamin Powell of Williamsburg, consideration £1070. *Ibid.*

²² *CCAM*, 3. This is only a small part of the work of which we have record, but the records are not complete. Much of the project seems to have been supervised by James Worrell ("James Worrell's Cash Record," *ACM*).

²³ *Christ Church Vestry Minutes, 1767-84* (MS, Christ Church), 212-218. *Christ Church Archives, MS Box 26*, various items transcribed by Robert W. Shoemaker, U. S. Natl. Park Service.

²⁴ *Christ Church Vestry Minutes*, 215, 216, 217. Philadelphia Deed Book 1-9, 530-533.

²⁵ *Pennsylvania Archives (VIII Ser.)* 8: 7220-7221. The steeple was not actually removed until 1781.

²⁶ *Christ Church Vestry Minutes*, 272, 275, 276.

²⁷ Mease, 179-181. Scharf and Westcott, 267. There were minor buildings added later and the whole was surrounded by a 20' stone wall.

²⁸ *Minutes of the Common Council*, Philadelphia, 1847, 795.

1775, July 24. Presented to the Pennsylvania Committee of Safety "a model of a machine for obstructing the Navigation of the River Delaware" and offered his services gratis for supervision of the work. These *chevaux-de-frise*, as they were called, were made of logs and weighted down with ballast stone. Smith's offer was accepted and a number built in the following year and used to good effect.²⁹

1775, Aug. 5. Presented to the Committee of Safety a model of a machine for raising and lowering ballast for the *chevaux-de-frise*.³⁰

1776, Jan. 19. Ordered, with David Rittenhouse and John M'Neal, to proceed to Liberty Island "and determine on and lay out such works as they shall think sufficient to defend it" and to employ workmen to complete them.³¹

1776, Aug. 2. Letter to the Provincial Council from Smith shows that he has been active in construction of barracks and other works about the fort at Billingsport, New Jersey, as well as the making and placing of the *chevaux-de-frise*.³²

Smith died on February 11, 1777, and a notice of his burial was carried by the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* two days later:

Last Tuesday morning MR. ROBERT SMITH, architect, died at his house in Second-street, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, after a tedious and painful indisposition, which he bore with uncommon fortitude and resignation. Yesterday his remains were interred in Friends burying ground, attended by many persons of character. By the death of this worthy and ingenious man, the public have sustained a very heavy loss, and his relations and acquaintances have to lament the sincere, steady, and affectionate friend. Several public buildings in this city, and its environs, are ornaments of his great abilities.

The personal effects as inventoried at his house in Southwark on April 12, 1777, were valued at £520/19/9. Besides an extensive assortment of household goods, the following business effects were listed:

Sundrey Books of Architecture and Drawing Instrumts	£23.16.6
Sundrey blocks and ropes	2. 0.0
Sundrey old Lumber	1. 0.0
Sundrey Carpenter Tools	11. 0.0
1/2 Box Glass	2. 0.0
To Sundreys in the two store rooms, Iron Stoves, old iron work, Sundrey Paints, &c.	10.10.0
To Sundrey Lumber in the Yeard by the house	6. 0.0
Sundrey Lumber in Shop yeard Including the Lumber in Shop	20. 0.0

²⁹ *Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania* 10 (1771-76): 290, Harrisburg, 1852.

³⁰ *Ibid.* 10: 299.

³¹ *Ibid.* 10: 462.

³² Hist. Soc. Penna., *Autograph Collection* (MS), Smith to Wm. Hicks [Billingsport] Aug. 2, 1776. See also Smith to Council, Billingsport, Oct. 8, 1776, *Pennsylvania Archives* (I Ser.), 5: 8, 9, Phila., 1853.

Esther Smith, widow, and John Smith, carpenter, the eldest son, were the administrators of the estate and Joseph Rakestraw, carpenter, and Thomas Affleck, cabinet maker, were among the four subscribers to the inventory.³³

Although no real property list has been found, Smith must have owned a number of houses. His estate before liquidation received rent from at least thirteen properties including a "vendue house" and a tavern in Moyamensing known as "the sign of the Buck." These may have been built by Smith on speculation. Thomas Musgrave bought an unfinished house and lot from the estate in 1779.³⁴

The value of the estate seems to have decreased during liquidation. Whether Robert Smith was actually bankrupt when he died or whether mismanagement and the post-war inflation was responsible does not appear. The occupation of Philadelphia by the British added to the troubles, for it was noted that the "Sundry Lumber" in the yard was appropriated by the enemy, as was the hay in the barn in the meadow. At the same time, very little rent was taken in.

In 1786 Ann Rhoads, to whom Robert Smith's estate owed £64/10/3, complained that she got "nothing but abusive language" from John Smith, the administrator³⁵ and the following year the latter was sued for £130 and his property was seized by the sheriff of Chester County.³⁶

³³ Philadelphia, Register of Wills, 1777, No. 52. Notice of settlement, *Pennsylvania Gazette*, Apr. 9, 1777. Final statement Oct. 10, 1789.

³⁴ The administration papers from the estate show "Rent" from Barry Buck, Joseph Baker, Andrew Hayward, James Rowan, and Mrs. Hackenlock. House-rent from George Meade and ground-rent from John O'Neal, Mrs. Lake, Duncan Leech, Michael McGannon, and Rose Stewart. It was a period of speculation in lands. Samuel Powel "the great builder" owned more than ninety city houses when he died in 1759. Bridenbaugh, 207.

The tavern, owned by Smith as early as 1773, was kept by Thomas Mushett and advertised for rent after Smith's death. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, April 9, 1777. It was finally sold to John Levin at the order of the Orphans' Court. Another piece of real estate owned by Smith was a lot on the east side of Second Street between Spruce and Walnut Streets bought from Samuel Powel August 17, 1768. It had a 19'6" front and extended back to Dock Street. Hist. Soc. Penna., *Brayton Papers* (MS) Parchments. Smith's signature is accompanied by a wax seal of oval shape with what appears to be pipes of Pan bordered with laurel.

³⁵ Amer. Philos. Soc. *Franklin Papers*, Ann Rhoads to B. F., Philadelphia, December 15, 1786. Joseph Rhoads, her husband, house carpenter (died 1784), had his property destroyed by the British while serving in the Continental Army. His widow complained that she and her five small children were about to be turned out of doors and begged for payment from the estate.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, John Smith to B. F., Phila., Aug. 24, 1787. John Smith was elected to the Carpenters' Company about 1779. He gave up his position as Senior Warden when he moved to Chester County in 1784. By 1804 he was in financial trouble. In a letter to the Company dated January 8, he wrote: "Throo the dulness of the times and the scarcity of Circulating Cash &c—I have had no buizeness this three Months past that I have earn'd

Robert Smith must have been an early member of the Carpenters' Company although we have no contemporary record of his election.³⁷ By 1770 he was the fifth active member in point of seniority.³⁸ His greatest contribution to the Company of record was his work for the Hall in purchasing the lot, canvassing for building funds (he subscribed £20 himself) and furnishing the design. The records show that he served with the committee on prices in 1763,³⁹ a financial committee in 1766⁴⁰ and others. The records of the Company are missing—or were not kept—during the difficult war year of 1777 when Smith died.

We know nothing of Smith's own apprenticeship and little more of the men trained under him. In a letter to Deborah Franklin in 1766 he mentions an employee named Barnabas Neave⁴¹ and we have an historian's statement that John Keen, afterwards a member of the Carpenters' Company was apprenticed to Smith.⁴² In the fall of 1770 John Oneal and James Baxter seem to have been journeymen working for Smith on the cupola of Carpenters' Hall at six shillings per day.⁴³ His own son, John, also a house carpenter, worked with him on the repair of Christ Church steeple.⁴⁴

None of Smith's drawings and few of his papers are known to exist, but we have record that his place of business in 1763 was "in Second-street on Society Hill."⁴⁵ In 1769 he was taxed for one horse, one cow, and two

a farthing by. I have sustain'd several badd debts—likewise Money owing to Me which canott immediately Collect—I likewise have been at a Considerable expence by My Wife haveing two spells of Sickness within this Six Months past—therefore from the Above mention'd circumstances I am nessiated to aply to You for a loan of One hundred Dollars."

He was on the relief list of the Company from May, 1804, to January, 1805. The month following they bought for him a muslin winding sheet and a twelve dollar walnut coffin and paid for burying him.

The Philadelphia Directory for 1785 lists a John Smith, carpenter, living at the corner of Seventh and Chestnut Streets. In the following year Administrator John Smith wrote that he then lived twenty-seven miles from Philadelphia.

³⁷ The statement that he became a member in 1736 must be in error. He would have been only fourteen years of age at that time.

³⁸ See *Warden's Book, 1769-1781*, many entries.

³⁹ *AIBLCC*, 9.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 10.

⁴¹ Amer. Philos. Soc. *Franklin Papers* (MS) 48 (2): 93.

⁴² *Penna. Mag. Hist. & Biog.* 4: 349, 1880, Gregory B. Keen, The descendants of Jöran Kyn, the founder of Upland. Keen was born 1747, elected to the Carpenters' Company 1772, became Vice-President 1801, and died in 1832.

⁴³ *CCAM*, 3.

⁴⁴ *Christ Church Archives*.

⁴⁵ From an advertisement of James Clow, a stucco worker recently arrived from Britain and with whom he was presumably associated. *Pennsylvania Journal*, Dec. 29, 1763.

While this essay was in galley proof, Mr. A. Lawrence Kocher of the Williamsburg restoration called to my attention that an advertisement in the *Pennsylvania Chronicle* for April 20-27, 1767, refers to Smith as "Carpenter on Society Hill." He also advises that Smith's drawings for the Eastern State Hospital at Williamsburg are, or were recently, in existence.

servants in Southwark and in 1774 for one horse, one cow, and one servant.⁴⁶ At the time of his decease in 1777, as we have seen, he had equipment and materials in a shop in Southwark.

The Carpenters' Company library now has three works which belonged to Robert Smith:

Colin Campbell, *Vitruvius Britannicus; or, the British Architect*, 3 v., London, 1731 (bought 1756).

Batty Langley, *The City and County Builder's Treasury of Designs*, London, 1750 (bought 1751).

Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books of Andrea Palladio's Architecture*, London, 1738 (bought Philadelphia, February 2, 1754).⁴⁷

These volumes seem to have come by way of John Smith, the son, who sold four to the Company on March 7 and 21, 1804, for \$24.00. It would be interesting, and perhaps profitable, to compare each of the designs in these volumes with Smith's buildings to see whether any of the English sources can be identified in his designs.

From the newspapers of the period we know that Smith was politically active in the Revolutionary movement, like other leading members of the Carpenters' Company. On June 15, 1774, he was appointed to a special committee to correspond with the mechanics of New York City.⁴⁸ A week later he was named to "a

large and respectable" Philadelphia committee created to correspond with the "Sister Colonies," prepare for local defence and to send relief to occupied Boston.⁴⁹ As we have seen, he was deeply involved in the design and construction of the Delaware River defences against British naval action, and died while the work was still under way.

Smith seems to have been socially active, especially in company with other men in public life and in the building business. In the period 1766-1774 Jacob Hiltzheimer in his diary mentions eleven affairs at which both he and Smith were present. There were a number of dinner parties featuring fish or steak. Smith himself was the host on four occasions—a housewarming (March 19, 1766), a barbecue, a dinner, and a punch party—at his Buck Tavern.⁵⁰ The respectability of his position in Philadelphia is indicated by election to the American Philosophical Society in 1769.

The practice of architecture today is a business as well as an art, and in eighteenth-century America it was even more so. Robert Smith in his own time was referred to as "carpenter," "house carpenter," "builder," and "architect." The historical designation we use today is "carpenter-architect."⁵¹ His designs for the Schuylkill River bridge and the defences of the Delaware River also entitle him to the title of "engineer."

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, June 22, 1774.

⁵⁰ The first party mentioned was a "cider frolic" at Greenwich Hill, Jan. 24, 1766, and the last a raising dinner at the Walnut Street Prison, Sept. 10, 1774. *Hiltzheimer*, various entries.

⁵¹ At the time of his death, Jacob Hiltzheimer in his diary (Feb. 12, 1777) called him "carpenter," the *Pennsylvania Evening Post* (Feb. 13, 1777) "architect." Dr. James Mease, writing some years later, referred to him as "that excellent and faithful architect."

⁴⁶ *Pennsylvania Archives* (III Ser.) 14: 144, 439. The administration papers show that he had one negro boy sold to Joseph Musgrave.

⁴⁷ Information from Alphonse F. Trezza, Univ. of Penna. Library, who has prepared a study of the Carpenters' Company library.

⁴⁸ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 15, 1774.



FIG. 15a. Carpenters' Hall from the South. Today the old Hall awaits the development of the new National Park to remove the sea of parked automobiles which surrounds it. Photo. by Knickerbocker.

APPENDIX II
ENGRAVINGS FROM THE FIRST PUBLISHED RULE BOOK, 1786

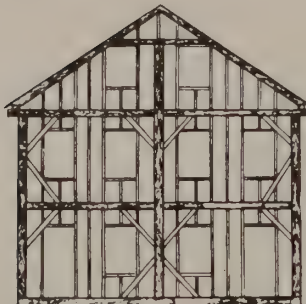
ARTICLES

OF THE
CARPENTERS COMPANY
OF
PHILADELPHIA;
AND THEIR
RULES
FOR MEASURING AND VALUING
HOUSE-CARPENTERS WORK.

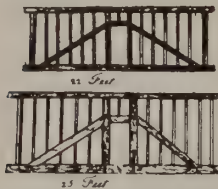
PHILADELPHIA: PRINTED BY HALL AND SELLERS,
M,DCC,LXXXVI.



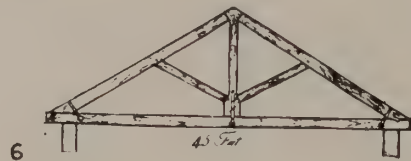
3



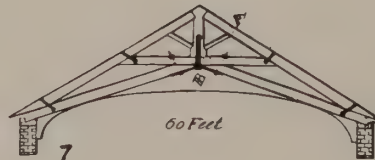
4



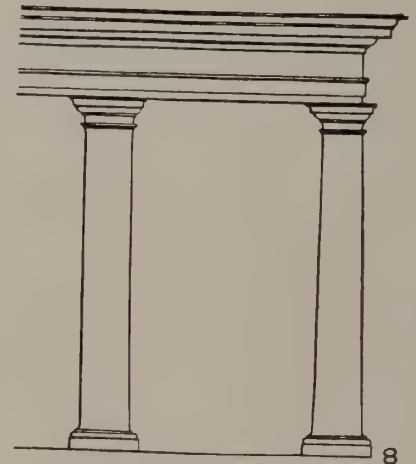
5



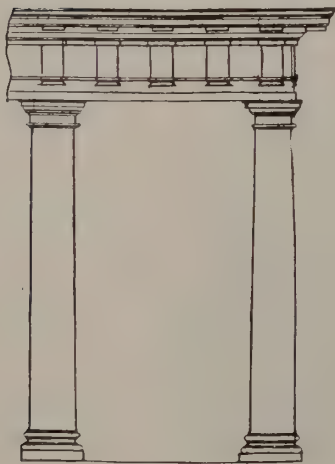
6



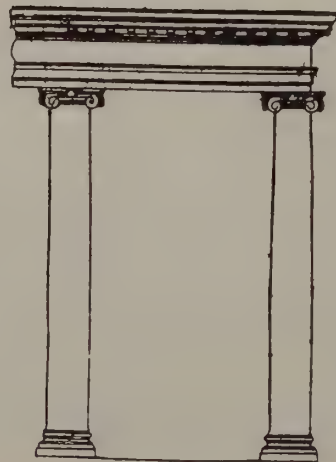
7



8



9

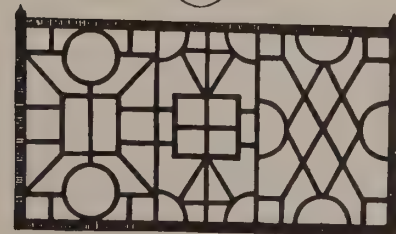
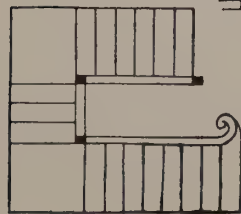
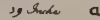
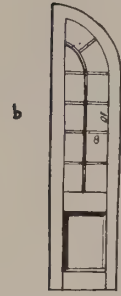


10



11

1. Title page. 2. Bookplate. 3. Plan of a floor frame. 4. End wall of a frame building. 5. Trussed partitions framed with posts and braces. 6. Plain truss with king post. 7. Roof truss for an arched ceiling. 8. Roman Doric order. 9. Doric order with triglyphs and modillions. 10. Roman Ionic order. 11. Corinthian order.



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APPENDIX III

LIST OF NAMES OF THE CARPENTERS' COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA, 1786¹

Joseph Henmarsh,*	Robert Smith,*	James Portues,*
Benjamin Loxley,	Samuel Powel,*	James Worrell,
Jacob Usher,*	John Goodwin,*	Edmond Woolley,*
Abraham Carlile,*	Joseph Harrison,*	James Davis,*
John Nichols,*	Ellis Price,*	John Harrison,*
Gunning Bedford,	Benjamin Clark,*	Thomas Nevell,
Isaac Zane,	James Armitage,	William Clark,*
Samuel Griscom,	Edward Warner,*	James Pearson,
Samuel Rhoads,*	John Wayne,*	Reese Lloyd,*
William Roberts,	Joseph Rakestraw,*	Levi Budd,
Tobias Griscom,*	George Plim, junior,*	John Mifflin,
Isaac Lefever,*	William Coleman,*	Richard Armit,
John Price,*	James Potter,	Joseph Hitchcock,*
Benjamin Mifflin,*	Jacob Lewis,*	George Wood,
Joseph Fox,*	Ezekiel Worrell,*	Joseph Thornhill,
Josiah Harper,*	John Thornhill,*	Joseph Rakestraw,
Silas Engles,	John Smith,	Joseph Rush,*
Matthias Sadler,	Joseph Rhoads,*	James Gibson,
Isaac Coats,*	George Ingels,	Patrick Craghead,*
Frazer Kinsley,	William Dilworth,*	James Corkrin,
Robert Carson,*	Joseph Rakestraw, junior,	William Rakestraw,*
Joseph Thornhill, junior,	John Hitchcock,*	John King,
Joshua Pancoast,*	Andrew Boyd,	Lawrence Rice,*
Conrad Bartling,	Evan Peters,*	William Garrigues,
William Lownes,	John Rugan,	Samuel Powel,
Mark Rodes,	Joseph Gridley,*	Robert Evans,
William Robinson,	Joseph Wetherell,	James Bringham,
Hugh Roberts,	James Graysbury,	Isaac Jones,
Jacob Reary,*	Samuel Pancoast,	Thomas Shoemaker,
Matthias Val Keen,	David Evans,	William Stevenson,
William Colliday,	Robert Morrell,	Abraham Jones,*
Richard Mosley,	Thomas Middleton,*	John Reinhard,
William Boyer,*	Samuel Pastorius,	William Ashton,
John Barker,	John Trip,*	Josiah Matlack,
Andrew Edge,*	John Piles,	Samuel Jervis,
Joseph Clark,	Samuel Wallis,	William Zane,
Matthew McGlathery,	Benjamin Mitchell,	Moses Thomas,
Thomas Savery,	John Allen,*	Nathan Allen Smith,
Thomas Procter,	Samuel Tolbert,*	Adam Zantzinger,
Samuel Jones,	John Keen,	John Hall,
John Lort,	Joseph Howell, junior,	Joseph Govett,
Israel Hallowell,	Joseph Ogilby,	John Harrison,
William Williams,	Ebenezer Ferguson,	Robert Allison,
John Donohue,	George Forepaugh,	John Cooper,
Samuel McClure,*	William Linnard,	

¹ This list is taken from the Company's Rule Book of 1786. Names marked with an asterisk were then deceased.

APPENDIX IV

DESCRIPTIONS BY FIRE INSURANCE SURVEYORS

Carpenters' Hall, December 22, 1773 (Philadelphia Contributionship for the Assurance of Houses against Loss by Fire, Nos. 1772 and 1773. Value £750).

50 feet Square having a 10 ft Brake in each Corner thereof two Storys high 14 inch walls—two Rooms and pasage below—3 Rooms & pasage, in Second Story plasterd. partitions—two Storys of open Newel Stairs—Rampd. and Bracketed—Straight Joint floor in first Story the Rooms finishd. very plain Glass 12 by 0[?] a frett in Bedmold of Eaves Cornish. A Cupola on the Roof New
Gung. Bedford

Carpenters' Hall, April 25, 1851 (Contributionship Policy No. 8520. Value \$3000.00).

I have Surveyed the building known as Carpenters Hall, for the Carpenters Company, situate at the head of Carpenters Court, which runs south from Chestnut Street, East of & near Fourth Street, Being 50 feet square with a break of 10 feet in each corner, see plan below, two storys high. 14 inch walls.

The lower story in one room and passage for the stairs the floor of clean heart pine plain base, double architraves to the doors knee'd and mouldings to the windows the Glass 9 x 12 outside shutters a large D. window in the south side, the break in North East corner built up, one story for fire proof.



FIG. 16. Floor plan, 1851 (enlarged). Ground floor one large room, except for the fire proof and closet. Philadelphia Contributionship.

The second Story in three rooms and passage, the floor of common heart pine, plain base, double architraves to the doors, & mouldings to the windows, inside shutters to the East room, one wooden mantel, the Glass 9 x 12, the three front windows with circular heads & balisters below—Stairs open Newel & open string. Ramp'd rail & Turned balisters, & plain brackets, leading from the lower story to the loft above, which is partly floored with rough boards, & a step ladder up to the Cupola which is actagon shape 10 feet diameter & about 26 feet high, with a Ball & Vane &c. Wooden cornice to the four sides of the building, a pediment

to each front & slate roof. Copper & tin pipes, a large frontice piece with columns in front, the lower story papered, a Furnace in the Cellar which appears safely constructed.

D. R. Knight

Carpenters' Hall, July 17, 1857 (Contributionship Policy No. 8520).

I have Resurveyed the Carpenters Hall & find the following alterations & additions viz. The Lower story has been made into two rooms, two 24 light sash doors between the rooms the Glass 9 x 12, two Fire Proof closets. the wood work in this story Grained.

The second story is now in 7 Rooms & passage the wood work in the 2 Rooms on the west side & the passage is grained. two water closets & small reservoirs (walnut seats) stationary wash stand marble top & back & cold water & Urinal. Iron sink with cold water & a summer Range Marble mantel shelf & Iron brackets, 3 Closets, & a Range of Closets filling up one side of the kitchen two stucco Brackets in the passage. all outside wood work except shutters & sash painted & sanded. The first & second stor-ies papered throughout & the Gas pipes plastered in through-out. The steps from the first story to the second story have been covered with Cast Iron plates. Tin Gutters have been put on the slate Roof, & a Tin Roof put on the outside Fire Proof over the shingles

D. R. Knight
Surveyor

Carpenters' Hall, April 25, 1870.

I have Resurveyed the annexed described premises, and find the following Alterations and additions, Viz., The first Story is now in one room, and passage for the Stairs. Two wooden Ionic fluted columns, with bases and capitals, and plain Entablature, have been placed in the opening formed by recess of the Southern Wall, at the East and West Angles, and two Semi-columns of Same description and finish, put in Corresponding positions, opposite, on the Northern Wall. Walls and Ceiling painted. Register in floor.

Second Story. The platform in front of Fireproof removed: white marble Ashlar from floor to side of fireproof down. A plastered partition built across room at South End of passage, forming a closet; three light transom hung on a pivot in partition; entrance to bathroom through a closet on West Wall of South Eastern room. Jalousie Shutters, inside to window of Small room on East side of passage—To Registers.

Louis Moore, Surveyor

Carpenters' Hall, October 30, 1874.

I have Resurveyed the above described premises and find the following Alterations and Additions, Viz. The One story building at the North East angle has been removed, as has also the wall to that part of the Vestibule, that was enclosed, and use as a Fireproof: three additional windows similar to those described in the Survey have been developed: the iron doors to the fire-proof have been removed and the doorway closed with brick-work—the foregoing Alterations are in the 1st Story. Cellar One pair of 12 light 9 x 16 in folding sash doors, also one pair of 8 x 13

in folding sashes hung with hinges. Not heretofore described in the cellars: also an additional Gas oven.

Louis Moore, Surveyor

Carpenters' Hall, October 22, 1888.

I have resurveyed the foregoing and annexed described premises and find that the ceiling of the front room west side in the second story has been lined with white walnut boards (planed and grooved) and black walnut cornice—a fire proof safe with double iron doors has been made in chimney breast and the front and sides outside, lined with paneled walnut wainscot from floor to ceiling—2 walnut doors—4 inch walnut architraves—the four windows in said room have been finished with back panels, moulded sub skirting and inside rolling blind shutters folding into boxes—all of walnut—platform for desks in front of fire proof—the two windows in room back of the above have inside rolling blind walnut shutters—an iron bath tub with hot and cold water and the outside lined with boards planed and grooved has been put in room at south end of passage.

Jas. A. Campbell, for
Daniel R. Knight—Surveyor

* * *

“Building F” (Second Meeting Hall) December 6, 1791
(Contributionship, No. 2481. Value £200).

a house belonging to the Carpenters Company of phia., situate on the west side of a 14 feet alley Leading from Chesnut Street to their Hall 61 feet front—19 feet 8 in. deep—2 Storys high, 14 & 9 inch walls, 3 Rooms in each Story, some plasterd., and some Board partitions paperd., finishd., very plain inside, floors of Good Sap Board, one Story of plain dog Leg Stairs, 1 Story of Comon winding Stairs, out Side and one Story within painted, Block Cornice to eaves, new.

“Building F” (Second Meeting Hall) October 31, 1833
(Contributionship, Resurvey of No. 2481).

I have Resurveyed a House belonging to the Carpenters Company of Philada—Situate on the west side of Carpenters Court—Insured by Policy No 2481—recently raised from two, to three Stories high—The 3d. Story divided in two rooms & short passage, the floor of 5/4 in yellow pine moulded bas round. Single mouldings to the doors & windows. Glass 8 by 10 in—outside venetian Shutters. Sash dble hung*—Shed roof hip'd at the South end—wooden Cornice—tin Gutter & pipes.—Stair way, Privy &c. newly built at the south end & adjoining the above—being 8 ft. by 20 feet—three Stories high—9 in walls—floors of 5/4" yellow pine. Single mouldg to the windows—Straight

Stairs with winders in the corner leading to the 3d. Story—Straight rail & plain banisters, painted—Shed roof hip'd at the South corner—wooden eave—tin gutter & pipe.—

John C. Evans

* Garret in one room, plastered, yellow pine floor, plain base round, two circular dormer windows & trap door in the roof—the old Stair way continued up—plain & straight—with winders in the corner, & plain rail.—

* * *

The Front Store, “Building H”—April, 1811 (Mutual Assurance Co., Survey No. 1709. Value \$2000.00).

SURVEY, For the Carpenters Company of the City & County of Philadelphia, Their new four Story Brick house, Situate on the Southwest Corner of Chesnut Street & Carpenters Court, between third & fourth Streets,—Dimensions, 26 feet by 44 feet, First Story, 1 Room, occupied as a book store, neatly Shelv'd, with a wood Cornice over do. plain mantle, washbds &c windows cased, 2 arch head windows, a neat arch head venetian door with fan & Side lights,—2 walls lined,

Second Story, 1 Room, washbds' windows Cased 2 walls lined.—A part of the Second floor open with painted hand-rails & ballusters around,—

Third Story, 1 Room, plain mantles, washbds. & windows Cased,—

Fourth Story, 2 Rooms, finished Similar, Left not plaisterd, Trap door, Roof hipt. & pitch four ways,

Back Building, 19 feet 6 inches, by 27 feet, three Stories high,—In a part of this building are 3 flights open newell painted Rampt handRail Stairs, Close String, A neat Arch head venetian door with fan & side lights,

Other part—First Story, 1 Room, plain mantle washbds & windows Cased,

Second Story, 1 Room. Similar, with Closets,

Third Story, 1 Room Similar, to Second Story,

Loft—not plaistered, Trap door,—2 floors narrow heart pine, other floors heart pine bds,

Glass, 84 lights 13 by 20—72 do. 12 & 12 by 18—92 do. 12 by 15—60 do. 11 by 16—84 do. 12 by 36 do. 10 by 12 inches,—party walls 9 inches, Board partitions.—Materials good & well Built, Brick ash holes.—West a three Story Brick house, South a two Story Brick Building, with which it Communicates, & which is insured in the Contributionship Assurance Company,—Water plenty.

(Signed) Philip Justus

LIBRARY HALL: HOME OF THE LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA 1790–1880

CHARLES E. PETERSON *

Resident Architect, Independence National Historical Park Project



FIG. 1. Birch Engraving, 1800. Set well back from Fifth Street and facing the State House yard, Dr. Thornton's Library displayed architectural character new to Philadelphia.

THE story of the Library Company of Philadelphia has been often sketched and is generally well known.¹ Founded by Benjamin Franklin and his friends in 1731—and chartered in 1742—the Company was to

* Acknowledgments: Special library assistance from Mr. Barney Chesnick, Ridgway Branch, Library Company of Philadelphia, suggestions from Dr. Robert C. Smith, and Mr. Edwin Wolf 2nd, and fire insurance surveys from James Somers Smith, Jr., and William C. Ross of the Philadelphia Contributionship. This article was first published in *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 95 (3): 266–285, 1951. Certain corrections and additions are now made.

¹ The first published sketch that has come to my attention is “A Short Account of the Library” published in *A Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia*, Phila., 1789. More recent works are: James Hardie, A.M., *The Philadelphia Directory and Register*, 200, 201, Phila., 1793; J. Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, 1173–1189, Phila., 1884; George Maurice Abbott, *A short history of the Library Company of Philadelphia*, Phila., Lib. Co. of Phila., 1913; and Austin K. Gray, *Benjamin Franklin's Library*, N. Y., Macmillan, 1936, n.a., The birth and devel-

build up a famous collection of books, one of the real cultural monuments of eighteenth-century America.² Less known is the history of the handsome building erected in 1789–90 which served to house the Library for nearly a century.

From the beginning, the institution had enjoyed a steady growth and enlarged its quarters a number of times to keep apace. The books were first kept at Pewter Platter Hall, in space rented from Robert Grace,

opment of Libraries in Philadelphia, in *The Free Library of Philadelphia, Report 1941–1944*, 37–49, Phila., Free Lib. Phila., 1950. Where these sources are used, footnotes do not always appear.

² Franklin called this institution the “mother of all the North American subscription libraries.” Albert Henry Smyth, ed., *The writings of Benjamin Franklin* 10: 159, N. Y., Macmillan, 1907.

Philadelphia was not far behind the capital. London's first lending library that offered books beyond a very small circle was founded in 1684 (William Kent, *An Encyclopedia of London*, 354, London, 1951).

a shareholder,³ and then in the home of William Parsons, librarian. The collections increased by purchase and gift and in 1738 John Penn, the Proprietor of the colony, sent an air-pump from London as a "useful and pleasant apparatus . . . to show the nature and power of air." By the time this contraption was housed in the large wooden cabinet made for it,⁴ the directors were looking around for more spacious quarters. Successful application was made to the legislature, and in 1740 the Library moved to the west wing of the new State House.⁵

In the year 1769 the Union Library Company, which had had its own building at Third and Pear Streets⁶ next to St. Paul's Church [E, V] was joined to the older company and a committee was appointed to petition for a building site on State House Square. The collection of books and "philosophical apparatus" was crowding the space then available. The proposal went to the legislature but the plan did not bear fruit.⁷ An agreement was finally reached with the Carpenters' Company by which the Library Company leased the entire second floor of their new Hall [D, IV],⁸ then nearing completion. They moved into that space in 1773⁹ and remained there through the difficult period of the Revolutionary War. Fortunately no real damage was done to the collections, which were frequently used by British military personnel.

The Carpenters' Hall quarters were not considered

really satisfactory because of combustible goods stored in the basement¹⁰ and during the post-war inflation period, when the rent was raised sharply, the directors of the Library began to look about for a new location.¹¹ The American Philosophical Society was then planning to erect a building on State House Square and suggested that the Library Company join with them in putting up balancing structures on the Walnut Street side of the square, similar architecturally.¹² A committee appointed to study this matter reported favorably and a joint petition by the two societies was submitted to the legislature. As it turned out, both organizations wanted to be on the east side of the square, closer to the center of the town, which was still hugging the banks of the Delaware. When the Philosophical Society won out, the Library Company withdrew altogether.¹³

Other sites were subsequently considered, including the Masonic Lodge, which was offered for sale in 1785, but the Library Company would not pay the price asked.¹⁴ At this point a delegation went to wait on Benjamin Franklin, recently returned from France.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 2: 44 (March 9, 1779). See also *Ibid.* 2: 233, 236-239. The occupation of Carpenters' Hall by the Library is discussed in Charles E. Peterson, *Notes on Carpenter's Hall*, 5-7, St. Louis, 1948 (mimeographed).

¹¹ *MPDLC* 2: 182, 183.

¹² *Ibid.* 2: 213, 214 (1784). According to Samuel Vaughan in a letter to Franklin dated Philadelphia, March 8, 1784, it was intended to develop the southeast and southwest corners of the State House Yard with balancing buildings "which are meant to be sufficiently ornamental not to interfere materially with the views of making a publick walk." MS. Amer. Philos. Soc., Franklin Papers.

¹³ The text of the joint petition is found in the Library of the American Philosophical Society (Archives, December 13, 1784), and the record of the relations of that Society to the joint efforts to obtain two suitable building lots on State House Square appears in the Minutes of its meetings from March to December, 1784. Of more than passing interest today (in relation to the Independence National Historical Park) is the proposal for the reconstruction at some future time of Library Hall to house the Library of the American Philosophical Society (*cf. Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 94 (3): 208-213, 1950). To effectuate this, Congress passed an act approved July 10, 1952 as follows:

"The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to permit the American Philosophical Society, a nonprofit corporation, without cost to the United States, to construct, operate, and maintain in the park a building to be located on approximately the original site of historic Library Hall to house the library of the American Philosophical Society and any additions to said library, such permission to be granted the society pursuant to a lease, contract, or authorization without charge, on such terms and conditions as may be approved by the Secretary and accepted by the society, and for such length of time as the society shall continue to use the said building for the housing, display, and use of a library and scientific and historical collections:

"*Provided*, That the plans for the construction of the building and any additions thereto shall be approved by the Secretary of the Interior." (Public Law 497, 82d Congress, Chapter 653, 2d Session, H. R. 6544.) At the annual meeting on April 26, 1952, the Society voted to reconstruct Library Hall.

¹⁴ *MPDLC* 3: 4, 5. The Lodge (in Lodge Alley) went for £1500, which was £500 higher than the Committee was willing to bid.

The secular nature of Franklin's institution is suggested by the comments of Dr. Robert Jenney of Christ Church: "we have a publick Library in the State-house; and some persons are incorporated by the proprietaries-Charter by the name of the Library Company, very few of which are Friends to our or any Religion" (London, Society for the Propagation of the Gospel Archives, *Letters Received*, Vol. B 19, Doc. 105, October 30, 1751).

³ Of the first home of the Library, Zachariah Poulson wrote in 1806: "Jones's Alley is now called Pewter-platter Alley, and the Building in which the Library was kept was afterwards occupied by David Hall as a Printing-office—it is back of the house in which Mr. Hornor had his Ironmongery Store." *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Directors of the Library Company of Philadelphia*, MS (*MPDLC*) 4: 209. Jones's Alley is now part of Church Street.

⁴ The original cabinet and part of the apparatus may be seen at the Ridgway Branch Library today.

⁵ The new space was on the second floor of the west wing or "Western Office." The entire original wing was removed and replaced about 1811. The present construction dates from the 1890's.

The Honorable Thomas Penn had given the Company a free building lot on Chestnut Street west of the town in 1738, but this was never used by them. Scharf and Westcott, 2: 1175.

⁶ Founded 1746. Pear St. is now Chancellor Street. For the history of the other local libraries see E. V. Lamberton, *Colonial Libraries of Philadelphia*, *Penna. Mag.* 42 (3): 193-234, 1918.

⁷ *MPDLC* 2: 63, 64 (January 10, 1772).

⁸ *Ibid.* 2: 74-76 (June 29, September 28, 1772). A committee for this purpose had been appointed as early as 1769. Scharf and Westcott, 1177.

⁹ *Ibid.* 2: 93.

Franklin assured them of his interest and hoped that they could manage to erect a new building of their own. He intimated that he would donate some valuable books which he would not consider safe in Carpenters' Hall.¹⁵ Another committee was appointed.¹⁶

On February 1, 1787, this committee reported in favor of erecting a suitable building on a lot "in some central safe Part of the Town" and the Board requested it to take an option on such a site.¹⁷ Joint construction of a building with the Philosophical Society was also

Decision was formally made at a stated meeting of the Company on June 4, 1789, Bishop William White presiding. The directors were authorized to purchase a site and they were given "power to contract for materials and workmanship, and shall cause to be erected a suitable building, with cellars, the said building to be two stories high, and of a size sufficient to accommodate and serve the purposes of the library, having regard therein to a gradual increase of books, and other articles there to be deposited."¹⁹ Financing was to be provided

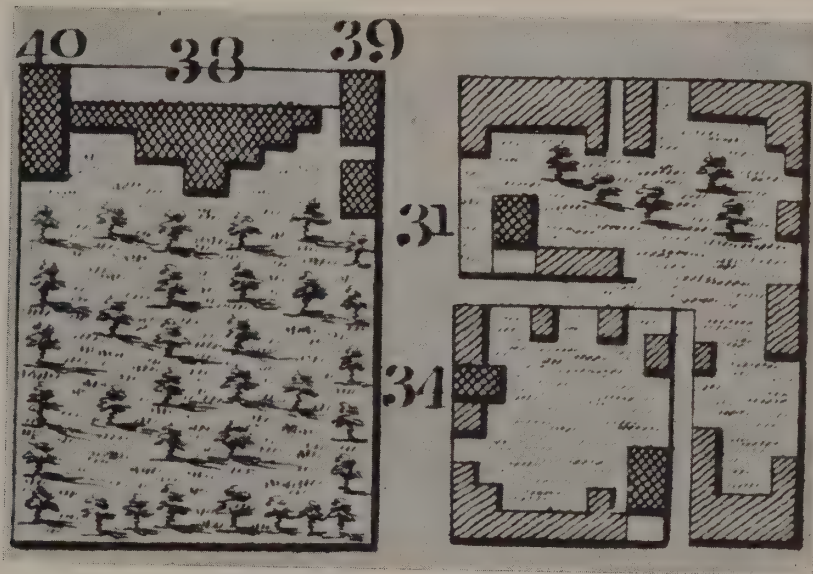


FIG. 2. Portion of Hills Map, 1796. Principal buildings identified are (31) Philadelphia Library, (34) Surgeon's Hall, (38) State House, (39) Old City Hall, and (40) Congress Hall. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

considered, but no agreement along those lines could be reached.¹⁸

¹⁵ *Ibid.* 3: 17, 18 (February 2, 1786).

¹⁶ *Ibid.* 3: 52. Members: Josiah Hewes, Richard Wells, Thomas Norris and Dr. Thomas Parke. Richard Wells played an important part in the project and seems to have been interested in architecture. On October 6, 1791, he presented the Company with "part of the Cornice from the great hall at Wresel Castle in Yorkshire, built about the year 1390." *Ibid.* 3: 280.

The records of the American Philosophical Society show that Wells became a member of that body on January 19, 1768, and served as its secretary in 1774-1776. On December 17, 1773, he communicated a paper on a plan for a snow plough and on January 21, 1774, one on raising water without the use of pumps or other machines. In 1782 he was a member of the Silk Society.

Wells is listed in the Philadelphia directories as merchant, 1785; esquire, congressman, and director of the Philadelphia Contributionship, 1791; cashier of the Bank of North America, 1794. The diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer (*Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer, 1765-1798*, J. C. Parsons, ed., Phila., 1893), 151, 177, shows that Wells in 1789 was a proponent of John Fitch, the steamboat inventor, as was William Thornton, and in 1792 he was directly concerned with the construction of the President's House on Market Street.

¹⁷ *MPDLC* 3: 53.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* 3: 79 (October 4, 1787).

by the sale of one hundred new memberships and the sale of surplus real estate.

After considerable investigation, a fine site on Fifth Street facing Philosophical Hall and the State House yard, was purchased [C, IV].²⁰ This ground was part of the gardens of the old Norris House, then being subdivided.²¹ It was an attractive location, shaded by trees and with a row of yellow willows along the street.²²

This was a period of rapid development in the neigh-

¹⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 150-152.

²⁰ This was composed of the rear of two long lots facing on Chestnut Street, part being purchased from Mary Norris (August 10, 1789), and part from George Logan *et ux.* (August 11, 1789). See *MPDLC* 3: 135, 157. A sheriff's sale of the corner lot, 55' 8" x 225', was advertised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for July 22, 1789.

The south boundary of the lot was "an alley leading from Fifth-street to a 50 feet [*sic*] court." This was first called "Norris Court," then "Library Street," and now "Sansom Street." On October 21, 1952 an ordinance was approved authorizing the Philadelphia Department of Streets, Board of Surveyors, to change the name back to "Library Street."

²¹ *Recollections of Samuel Breck*, H. E. Scudder, ed., 103, London, 1877.

²² *Reminiscences of Deborah Norris Logan*, ca. 1827, Bound MS, Hist. Soc. Penna.

borhood, the boom partly caused by the anticipated return of Congress to the city. One observer was reminded of London and commented, "Philadelphia does in reality increase very fast particularly toward the State House, great numbers of Houses tis said are to be built this summer."²³ Philosophical Hall and Congress Hall in the State House Yard across the street had just been completed and the Old City Hall on the nearest corner was under construction (fig. 2).²⁴

DOCTOR THORNTON'S PRIZE DESIGN

David Evans, carpenter and a shareholder, had been active in the Union Library Company, recently assimilated, and he assisted the Committee by making some preliminary designs.²⁵ His work seems not to have pleased the directors, however, for afterwards a new committee was appointed to "prepare a suitable plan and elevation of the building, to make inquiry with regard to the best method of procuring Materials and engaging workmen."²⁶ The sale of additional shares of capital stock was pushed.²⁷

At a meeting on June 15 the committee reported that they would soon have a design for the building and formally agreed on its size.²⁸ After some further delay, it

²³ Susanna to William Dillwyn, Philadelphia, March 24, 1792. Dillwyn Papers, MS, Library Company of Philadelphia. At the end of 1789, in anticipation of the moving of the Federal Government to Philadelphia, house rent had increased and the cost of building construction also. Robert Proud to William Proud, Philadelphia, January 10, 1790. Proud Papers, MS, Ridgway Library.

²⁴ Probably the best documented account of construction in the State House yard at this time is Robert P. Reeder, *The first homes of the Supreme Court of the United States*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 76 (4): 543-596, 1936.

²⁵ Evans had an important part in bringing the Union Library Company's building into being. He provided the lot for it next to his own house on Pear (now Chancellor) Street in 1761, and was perhaps its designer and builder. Lamberton, 198-199. No views of "The New Library in Third Street" are known to the writer. Evans was the donor of two volumes of English architectural design by Abraham Swan to the Library Company (1798 Catalog No. 276).

During the construction of Library Hall he was seriously injured in a fall from a three-story scaffold on Race Street. *Diary of Christopher Marshall*, MS, Hist. Soc. Penna., April 24, 1790. Evans was a member of the Carpenter's Company—elected in 1769 and expelled in 1815. *Charter, By-Laws, Rules and Regulations of the Carpenters' Company*, 60, Phila., 1916. David Evans, Jr., was the designer of the final, or central, unit of the old Philadelphia Hospital still standing on Pine Street. There was in Philadelphia at this time another David Evans, a cousin and cabinet maker. William Macpherson Hornor, Jr., *Blue Book, Philadelphia furniture*, Phila. 79, 1935.

²⁶ *MPDLC* 3: 157. The committee consisted of Richard Wells, Thomas Morris, John Kaighn and the Secretary, William Rawle.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3: 152.

²⁸ *Ibid.* 158. The size of the building was set at 70' front and 48' depth. Just what happened is not too clear; there was evidently a controversy over the design. At this juncture (July 8) it is interesting to note that the Directors traded a share in the Company for a morocco-bound folio edition of Inigo Jones' designs. *Ibid.* 3: 169.

was decided to advertise for plans and the following notice was run in the *Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser*:

Philadelphia, July 9, 1789.

TH E Directors of the Library Company of Philadelphia, being solicitous to render the Building proposed to be erected, as elegant as the unavoidable frugality of the Plan will admit, request ingenious Artists, and Friends to the Institution, to favour them with Designs and Elevations for the purpose.

The Building is to be 70 feet in length, 48 in depth, and two stories high. The present funds will not admit of any kind of Turret or Cupola.

The Directors will meet on the 20th instant, for the purpose of deciding on the Plan and Elevation. They acknowledge their Obligations for several ingenious Designs already sent in.

A Share in the Library will be granted to the Person whose Plan and Elevation is adopted.

In the meantime the building committee made a contract to procure scantling at £3 per thousand and were authorized to bargain for brick and stonework.²⁹

Several drawings were received as the result of the notice and "Carpenters and Masons of judgment" were consulted. Dr. William Thornton's elevation was selected and premiated with a share of the Company's stock. Thomas Carstairs, a Philadelphia builder,³⁰ received a second prize of £5 for the several elevations he had submitted.³¹

Dr. Thornton was a young physician who had recently come from the West Indies via New York City and Wilmington, Delaware. The doctor had had no architectural training and the design for the Library was the first he had ever made. He was afterwards to win the competition for the design of the United States Capitol in Washington and to design some other well-known buildings such as the Octagon House and Tudor

²⁹ *Ibid.* 158, 168.

³⁰ "Thomas Carstairs, Architect and House carpenter, lately arrived in this city from London," *Pennsylvania Packet*, Feb. 5, 1784. According to John W. Jordan, ed., *Colonial and Revolutionary families of Pennsylvania* 2: 870, N. Y. and Chicago, Lewis Pub. Co., 1911, Carstairs was born in Scotland in 1759 and died in 1830. He was elected to the Carpenters' Company in 1804.

³¹ *MPDLC* 3: 171, 172, 183 (October 1, 1789). The board in accepting the Thornton design ordered "an alteration in the Steps and Stone basement and some deviations in the ornament and disposition of the doors and windows."

The original drawings seem to have been lost long ago. The late Austin K. Gray (p. 34) stated that "No less a man than Thomas Jefferson submitted plans for the building" but no substantiation has been found for the statement.

A letter relating to the competition turned up in uncatalogued papers of the Library Company in 1952. Signed "IS [?]" one of the friends to the Institution" and dated at Philadelphia, July 20, 1789, it enclosed a design with a circular front now, unhappily, lost.

Place, Washington, Woodlawn, Fairfax County, and Pavilion VII at the University of Virginia.³²

In a letter written a few years later, Dr. Thornton explained the beginning of his architectural career:

It will perhaps be deemed presumptuous that I began to study Architecture, and to work for Prizes at the same time; long before I was appointed to my present office A Plan for a Public Library in Philadelphia was proposed,

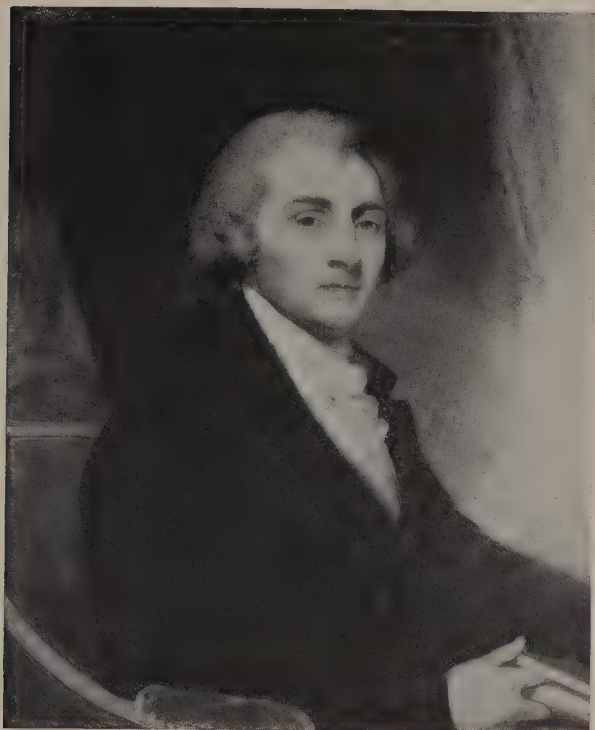


FIG. 3. William Thornton by Gilbert Stuart. Thornton, 1761-1828, was educated at Edinburgh as a physician but never practiced extensively. He is best known for his second architectural design, prize-winner for the United States Capitol at Washington. Courtesy of National Gallery of Art.

and the Prize for the best Plan &c was a Share in the Company. I studied Architecture, set to work, and drew one in the *ancient* Ionic order. . . . This Order I admire much. —The Prize was adjudged to me. . . .³³

Compared with present day commissions the prize seems paltry, the value of these shares being only ten pounds each.³⁴

³² For biographical notes see Appendix I.

³³ Thornton to —, Washington, October 10, 1797. William Thornton Papers, MS, Library of Congress.

³⁴ In 1792 plans for a Dancing Assembly Room were publicly requested an a prize of one subscription or £20 cash were offered. *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser*, April 10, 1792.

The same year competitions for designs for the United States Capitol and the President's House at Washington were announced. In each case a first prize of \$500 (or a medal of that value) was offered. For the Capitol there was also a second prize of \$250. The Washington competition required more study; drawings specified were "ground plats, elevations of each



FIG. 4. English Precedent. When Dr. Thornton began his studies the Library Company owned two sets of Abraham Swan's *Collection of Designs in Architecture* (London, 1757). The above design (Vol. 2, Plate 9) seems to account for the design of the new library. Courtesy of Library Company of Philadelphia.

Just what sources Dr. Thornton consulted for his design he did not say, but we can identify some of the architectural books in Philadelphia at that time. The Library Company had collected in that field from the beginning, two items having been requested with the very first books ordered in 1732 from London. These were a volume of Palladio and "Evelyns' Parallel of the ancient and modern Architecture."³⁵ During the year of the competition, the Library published a catalog listing twenty-one works under the heading of "Civil Architecture."³⁶ (See Appendix II.) These books, together with those owned by the Carpenters' Company and kept in the same building,³⁷ provided unusual reference opportunities for the period.

A review of these works points towards a design in Abraham Swan's *A Collection of Designs in Architecture* (London, 1757) as the principal influence. Swan seems to have been popular in Philadelphia, for there were two sets of the works in the Library at this time and it had been reprinted in the city in 1775 as the

front and sections through the building in such directions as may be necessary to explain the internal structure and an estimate of the cubic feet of brick work composing the whole mass of the walls." *Dunlap's American Daily Advertiser*, April 12, 1792.

³⁵ List of books in Historical Society of Pennsylvania, *Society Miscellaneous Manuscripts, Library Company of Philadelphia*. The Evelyn volume was marked "out of print or dear" and was probably not received.

³⁶ In an undated leaflet for the Library Company, Dr. Kimball wrote, "These books formed, indeed, the finest architectural library in America at that time, being rivalled only by the group in the library of William Byrd of Virginia, the largest private library in the Colonies, dispersed in 1779. With his great interest in architecture, Jefferson who had bought extensively at the Byrd sale, had but half the numbers of the Philadelphia group before he sailed for France in 1784."

For the full book list, enlightening as to the state of architectural resources in Philadelphia, see Appendix II. For information on Swan, see Henry-Russell Hitchcock, *American architectural books*, iii, 103, Minneapolis, Univ. of Minn. Press, 1946.

³⁷ For notes on other Philadelphia architectural books see Horner, 78, 79.

second architectural book published in America. Plate 9 in the second 1757 volume entitled "A Design for a House of Six Rooms upon a floor" (fig. 4) bears a strikingly close resemblance. It can be described as a two-story Palladian design having a center entrance with a pedimented bay of four pilasters, the whole on a low basement and covered with a hipped roof surrounded by a balustrade with urns (fig. 11). The principal difference between Swan's design and Thornton's is the shape and decoration of the windows. The Library windows, especially the round-topped openings with the "Gothic" sash, were in the current Philadelphia style and may well have been designed by one of the several master carpenters on the job. Thornton's original drawings seem to have been lost long ago and we have no written description of them.

We do not know whether Thornton supervised construction work at the site, as professional architects now do. In the eighteenth century the master mechanic played an important part in the final appearance of a building. Architects' drawings often provided only the general outlines. Details of such as entrance frontispiece and cornice—as well as interior effects—were usually left to mechanics—often anonymous, but responsible for some of the handsomest decorative features to be seen in early American work.

CONSTRUCTION

The exact site for the new structure—twenty feet back from the street—was determined on August 5³⁸ and the cornerstone erected on August 31. The stone³⁹ has been preserved and the inscription, except for that part relating to himself, was composed by the venerable Dr. Franklin (fig. 5).

Construction proceeded very quickly and to meet expenses a draft for £200 was drawn in favor of Richard Wells on September 5 for "Stone, Brick, Scantling, Digging the Cellar, Mason's wages."⁴⁰ The walls were ready for the roof by the end of October, when an entertainment for the workmen was planned.⁴¹

³⁸ MPDLC 3: 173.

³⁹ The stone may now be seen at the Ridgway Library.

⁴⁰ MPDLC 3: 182.

⁴¹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, October 13, 1789. "Custom has made a law," wrote a library shareholder, of the festivities to celebrate the raising of the roof frame.

When the roof of the Free Quaker Meeting House (Fifth and Arch Streets) was raised in 1784 the workmen were entertained with a rum punch. Herbert C. Wise and H. Ferdinand Beidleman, *Colonial architecture for those about to build*, 256, Phila., Lippincott, 1913.

Jacob Hiltzheimer reported a similar occasion the evening of July 7, 1792, when "the Carpenters, bricklayers and stonecutters were treated to a round of beef, ham and punch, to celebrate the putting down of the first floor" of the new house for President Washington. *Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer* (Parsons, ed.), 179, Phila., 1793.

The carpenters were also given a lunch when the second floor was completed (Sept. 7); a "cut of beef and some punch" at

Little detail has survived in the matter of the construction; the account books of the Building Committee have apparently been lost. Surviving records do show that payment to workmen was made at least partially

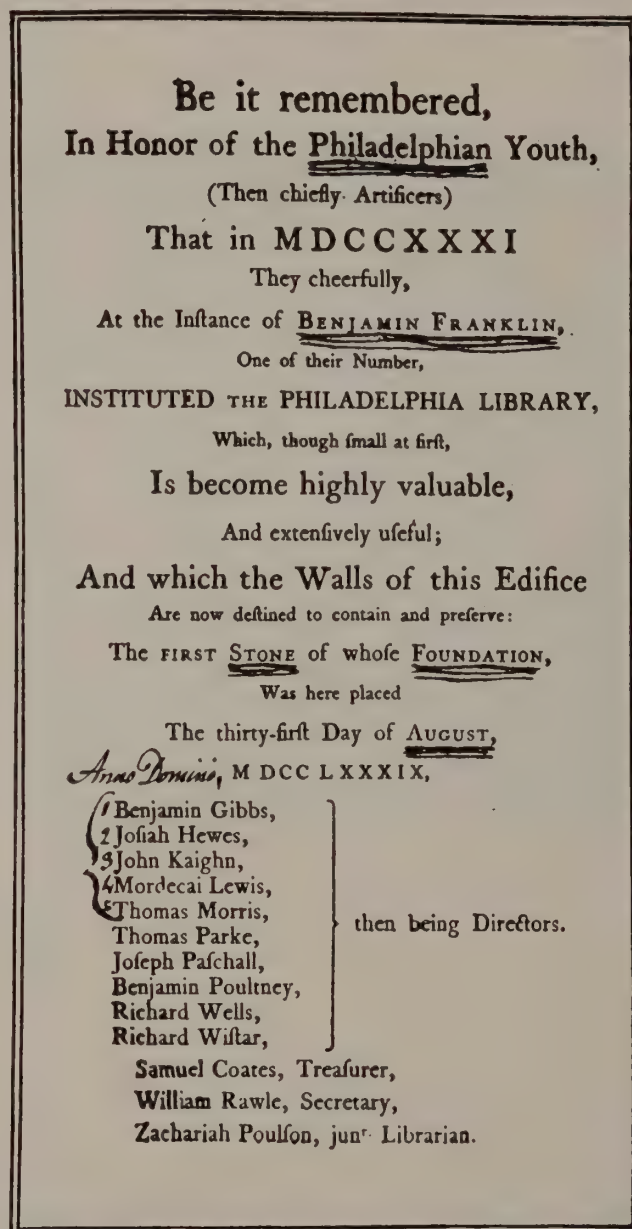


FIG. 5. Library cornerstone inscription on a rare broadside, possibly used at the laying ceremony, 1789. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

by the granting of Library Company shares. The project was a genuine community enterprise, to judge by the number of workmen mentioned as receiving such shares.

completion of the third floor (Nov. 2); beef and punch again at the beginning of the fourth floor (Nov. 29), and a raising supper for 180 persons when the first rafters had been erected (Dec. 1).

	<i>No. of Shares</i>
<i>Carpenters</i>	
William Garrigues	(3)
Joseph Ogilby	(2)
Samuel Pancoast	(3)
Joseph Rakestraw	(2)
Matthias Sadler	(2)
Joseph Govett	(2)
David Evans	(1)
William Williams	(2)
Joseph Hewlings	(1)
John Robins	(1)
Thomas Mitchell	(1)
Allen Ridgeway	(1)
William Lucas	(1)
Edward Brooks	(1)
<i>Plasterer</i>	
Samuel Shoemaker	(2)
<i>Painter</i>	
Jacob Hergesheimer	(1)
<i>Bricklayers</i>	
Jacob Ridgeway	(1)
Nicholas Hicks	(1)
Charles Souder	(1)
William Nash	(1)
Joshua Reper Smith	(1)
Benjamin Taylor	(1)
George Justice	(1)
Jacob Souder	(1)
<i>Stone Cutter</i>	
William Stiles	(3)
<i>Iron Mongers</i>	
Edward Brooks, Jr.	(1)
Jacob Parke	(1)
Richard Hopkins	(1)
Joseph Bringham, Jr.	(1) ⁴²

Other carpenters who applied for shares on account of work done by them are identified in the Philadelphia directories: John Cornish, William Krider (or Kreider), John Lort, William Roberts, Nathan A. Smith, Thomas Smith, Joseph Rakestraw, Jr., and Joseph Willis. David and Nathan Sellers, wire-workers, also participated, presumably in placing guards over bookcases.⁴³ No information has been located about the suppliers of building materials such as brick, marble, lumber, plaster, glass, and paint. All that has turned up is that John Haworth, the tanner, furnished hair for the plaster.

The new building was seemingly completed and the books moved from Carpenters' Hall about the beginning of October.⁴⁴ The first meeting of the directors was

held there on the seventh and Zachariah Poulson was appointed Librarian.⁴⁵

A good idea of the complete exterior may be had from the view engraved by William Birch in 1800 (fig. 1). The interior layout is not so clear. According to Moreau de Saint-Méry the first floor was divided into two parts: one for the six hundred subscribers with ten thousand volumes and one for the general public with about five thousand volumes.⁴⁶ A fire insurance description adds much to our knowledge of this period. The policy was taken out with the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses against Loss by Fire, and the "survey" by Gunning Bedford has been preserved in their archives. The structure was 40' x 70' in size. The "Large Room" on the first floor was fitted up with book shelves to the ceiling on the east, or rear, side and in part on either end. The highest shelves were reached from a light "gallery" which ran along in front and was approached by two flights of stairs. The librarian occupied a circular enclosure. The whole was decorated with Doric pilasters and entablature. Walls were whitewashed, as was the common practice of the time⁴⁷ (fig. 15).

Ascent to the second floor was made by a stairway to the right of the front door. Upstairs there were three rooms: one for Directors' meetings, one apparently for the scientific apparatus and one of unknown use, possibly the Librarian's office.⁴⁸

"October 7, 1790.

The Library Company of Philadelphia,
To Zachariah Poulson, junr. Dr.

To Cash paid Joseph Greswold for hauling some trunks from Wister and Aston's Store	£0.1.6
To ditto paid Ditto for hauling the Property of the Company from the Carpenters' Hall	4.10.0
To ditto paid Richard Thomas for 2-3/4 days labor, at 5/pr day	0.13.9
To ditto paid Nathaniel Basset for 3 days labor	0.15.0
To ditto paid Caesar Jones for 2 days labor	0.10.0
To ditto paid William for 1-1/4 days labor	0.6.3
To ditto paid a black Man, whose name I could not learn—he having neglected to return agreeably promise,	0.1.10-1/2
To ditto paid for white-washing the old Apartments in the Carpenters' Hall	1.10.0
To ditto paid for washing the windows and floors of the said Apartments	0.10.0
To ditto paid for washing some of the windows and a part of the Floor of the Directors' Room in the new Building	0.3.6
	£9.1.10-1/2"

⁴⁵ MPDLC 3: 224, 235.

⁴⁶ Moreau de Saint-Méry, *Voyage aux Etats-Unis, 1793-1798*, 379, New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1913.

⁴⁷ MPDLC 4: 249 (June 2, 1808). The interiors of Carpenters' Hall were still whitewashed in this period.

⁴⁸ Surveys 2414 and 2415 dated November 3, 1790. Some of the other inside specifications were: Floors, "Narrow Boards Naild. Through"; inside shutters all around; base and surbase all around. Outside: "Modillion & dintel Cornice," balustrade on roof with 17 urns.

⁴² Various entries in MPDLC 3. Also loose memoranda in Coates & Reynell Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna., Collection No. 140, "Library Company," loose papers.

⁴³ Coates & Reynell Papers, December 9, 1790, January 6, April 7, 1791.

⁴⁴ Notice by Librarian Poulson issued September 23, 1790. *The Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser*, October 22, 1790.

The expenses of the move are listed in an account submitted by Poulson:

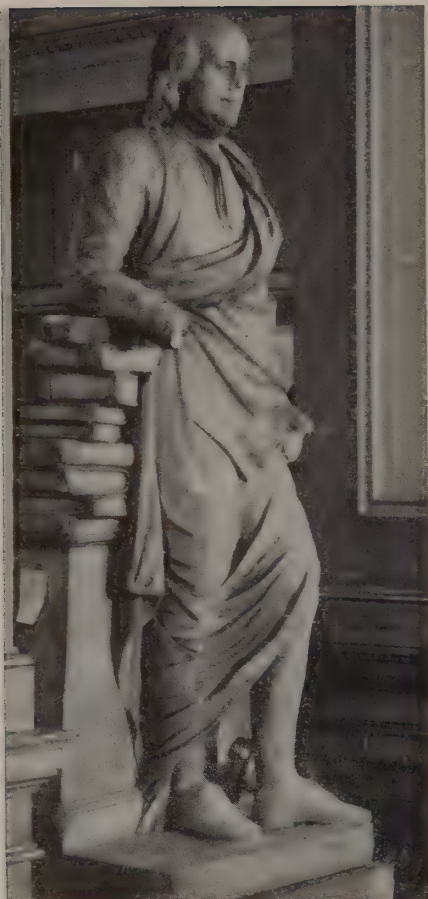


FIG. 6. Franklin Statue by Lazzarini. The statue of Carrara marble, originally raised to the niche over the front door of the Library in 1792, is now preserved at the Ridgway Branch. Courtesy of Library Company of Philadelphia.

About this time the wealthy Senator William Bingham offered to donate a white marble statue of Franklin to be placed in a niche on the front of the building. Dr. Franklin was consulted as to costume and he favored "a Gown for his dress and a Roman Head." A portrait bust was secured from the Managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital and forwarded to the sculptor in Italy along with a sketch of the figure.⁴⁹ The statue, carved from Carrara marble by François Lazzarini and said to have cost more than five hundred guineas,⁵⁰

⁴⁹ MPDLC 3: 180, 181, 182, 188. *Columbian Magazine or Monthly Miscellany*, January 25, 1790.

⁵⁰ *The Universal Asylum and Columbian Magazine*, April, 1792, 284. See also Margaret L. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Bingham, *Pennsylvania Magazine* 61: 299, 300, July 1937.

Richard North received £ 26s 8d for cutting and painting the following inscription on the base:

This Statue of
Dr. Benjamin Franklin
Was presented by
William Bingham, Esq.
MDCXCII

A letter to the newspaper suggested a shorter inscription. *Dunlap's Daily American Advertiser*, April 21, 1792.

was finally placed in its niche in April, 1792 (fig. 6). The Directors were very pleased and it was recorded in the minutes that they

... flatter themselves that, from the accuracy of its resemblance and the excellence of its execution, it will be considered not only as the first Ornament of their building, but as the most finished specimen of Sculpture America can exhibit; and, whilst it will have a tendency to perpetuate, in the minds of his fellow-citizens, a recollection of the public and private Virtues of its Original, cannot fail to remind them of the liberality and taste of its Donor.

The erection of the statue inspired a long poem in French in the daily paper.⁵¹ The memorial was all the more appropriate for the fact that the subject had died in the meantime.

The Building Committee found that the cost of construction altogether had been 4490 pounds.⁵²

The Franklin statue was hardly in its niche when an addition to Library Hall was projected. The success



FIG. 7. Library Hall, 1790. While the building was still under construction, the Library was shown in this portion of a copperplate "View of Several Public Buildings in Philadelphia." Philosophical Hall lies to the left and the old Loganian Library to the extreme right. *Columbian Magazine*.

of the project had attracted another important collection; the trustees of the Loganian Library had decided to bring their books under the same roof. James Logan (1674-1751), friend of William Penn and the most influential man in the province, had some years before built up a notable library of scholarly works which he left for the use of the public installed in a small brick building facing the State House yard on the west side (fig. 7). The whole had been deeded to the City, making it the first free library in America.⁵³ The building

⁵¹ *General Advertiser*, April 17, 1792. Signed "D. L. Morel, Habitant de St. Domingue." On May 12, Gideon Hill Wells was paid £ 12s. 6d. for "portorage of the Statue." *An Account of Expenses*.

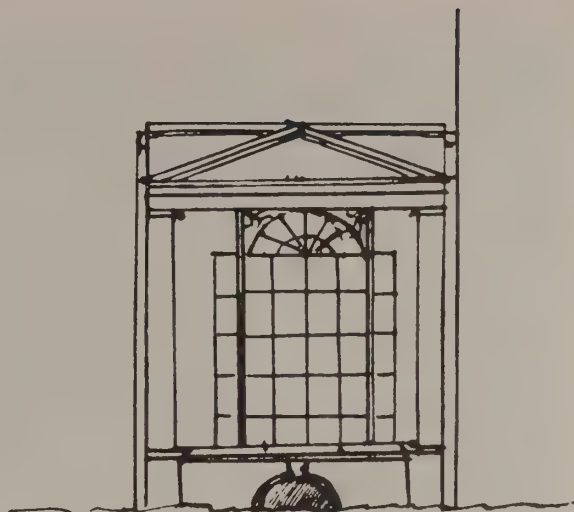
⁵² MPDLC 3: 308 (May 5, 1792).

⁵³ "Birth and Development of Libraries in Philadelphia," 42. Architectural drawings for this building by Logan are preserved at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The idea for a library at Newport, Rhode Island, is said to have come to Abraham Redwood after a visit to Philadelphia.

was opened to the public in 1760⁵⁴ but was closed entirely during the Revolutionary War, owing to the death or absence of all the trustees.

Dr. Franklin, before his death, had urged joining the collections of the Loganian Library and the Library Company and this was made possible by an act of legislature.⁵⁵ The stipulation was that the books were to be so housed as to maintain their separate identity.⁵⁶ To make possible the construction of additional space the Loganian heirs sold their old library building for £700⁵⁷ and loaned the Library Company a like amount for an addition, agreeing to pay rent for the space. An additional strip of land to the east was purchased⁵⁸ and plans for the extension were approved July 16, 1792.⁵⁹ The Loganian annex, as it was called, was completed and opened May 1, 1794.⁶⁰ The new addition was long and narrow, lighted by a "Palladian" or "Venetian" window at either end and from the top by a skylight in its copper-covered roof.⁶¹ In 1794 a lightning rod was added, a touch Dr. Franklin would have approved.⁶²

Library Hall seems to have made an excellent impression. Even before completion it was shown on the cop-



North & South Sides alike

FIG. 8. Study for Loganian Library, 1792. Pen drawing by an unknown hand. Courtesy Library Company of Philadelphia.

⁵⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, No. 1660, October 16, 1760.

⁵⁵ James M. Hardie, A.M., *The Philadelphia Directory and Register*, 202, Phila., 1793. Also urged by Samuel Vaughan in a letter to Franklin, March 8, 1784. MS, Amer. Philos. Soc., Franklin Papers.

⁵⁶ Abbot, 14-16.

⁵⁷ Loganian Library Account Book, MS, 2 (September 5, 1792).

⁵⁸ A five foot strip of land was acquired from Samuel M. Fox for \$500. *MPDLC* 3: 313, 315.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 3: 316, 317.

Discovered in 1952 among the uncatalogued papers of the Library Company are two roof plans and two elevations dated 1792 but unsigned. The elevation for the north and south ends is reproduced here (fig. 8). The chief problem seems to have been the skylights, for which oval and oblong forms were considered as alternates: "The sashes must be of metal and if neatly & strongly made the weather will have no access."

⁶⁰ Loganian Library Minutes: 30.

⁶¹ *MPDLC* 3: 323. The skylight "let into the interior of the Loganian a flood of light, and through the two-storied arched opening in the wall of the main building it found a clear and excellent situation for the desks of the Librarian, with light into the main building, and gave him, with the system of adjoining stairways leading to the galleries, full communication with every part of the building." *Public Ledger*, April 20, 1887, Supplement.

From a fragmentary account of 1795 it seems that the shingle roof was painted (with fish oil paint?). Bills from Samuel Wetherill & Son and John Elliott for 1797 mention the following pigments: yellow ochre, spruce yellow and Spanish brown.

⁶² Library Company of Philadelphia, uncatalogued papers: "August 7, 1794

To Skerrett & Bonsall D^r.

to 41 lb. of litening rod a 1/6d pr lb.	3..1..6
to 8 staples 6d apiece	0..4..0
for puting the rod up	0..7..6
to 1 brass tube gilded for the top of the rod	0..8..0

£4..1..0"

A "platina point" was added in 1815. *MPDLC* 4: 356.

per plate "View of Several Public Buildings in Philadelphia" published in *The Columbian Magazine* (fig. 7) which called it "an elegant and stately edifice."⁶³ Clement Biddle's Philadelphia directory for 1791 refers to it as "an elegant building . . . in a modern stile." Moreau de Saint-Méry, who did not admire Philadelphia architecture, admitted that the Library "adds to the decoration of the square on which it is built."⁶⁴ It may well have been an influence on other Philadelphia buildings such as Trumbull's First Presbyterian Church (Market Street) [E, III]⁶⁵ and Samuel Blodget's First Bank of the United States (Third Street) [D, IV] both under construction in 1796,⁶⁶ as well as the central, or final unit of the Pennsylvania Hospital a few years later.⁶⁷ It impressed other visitors to Philadelphia from the new American states.⁶⁸ Early in the nine-

⁶³ January, 1790, p. 25.

⁶⁴ Moreau de Saint-Méry, 379.

⁶⁵ Theodore Sizer, Mr. Trumbull's Church, *Jour. Soc. of Architectural Historians* 9 (3): 20-22, Oct. 1950.

⁶⁶ Stephen's Philadelphia Directory for 1796.

⁶⁷ The Philadelphia Library and the Pennsylvania Hospital have a family resemblance to the house design in Plate 116, William Pain, *The practical house carpenter*, Phila., 1797.

⁶⁸ To judge by the painter-architect John Trumbull, who urged the building committee of the new Connecticut State Capitol "to make use of the Philadelphia marble such as us'd in the front of the new library (if the price be not to extravagant) in the more elegant parts of the building." Trumbull to Walcott, Hartford, Conn., September 30, 1792. Charles A. Place, *Bulfinch architect and citizen*, 52, Boston and New York, Houghton, 1925.

However, Fiske Kimball and Wells Bennett wrote: "Its pedimented frontispiece of pilasters rising through two stories was in the accepted academic style of the time, but involved nothing new to American builders. The Pinckney house in Charleston, forty years older, offers a close parallel and seems likewise to



Fig. 9. The State House Yard, 1799. The Birch engraving shows the iron palisadoes which replaced part of the high brick wall and allowed a view from the Library into the State House Yard. This had recently been landscaped with plantings, walks and settees and was a popular promenade. Courtesy of Library of Congress.

teenth century the Library was well enough thought of to appear on one of a series of scenic plates called "Beauties of America."⁶⁹

In 1794 the grounds north of the Library were enclosed⁷⁰ and among the finishing touches was their planting with shrubs for which John Lithen received

have had the 'ancient' Ionic capitals of Palladio rather than the angular ones of Scamozzi." William Thornton and the design of the United States Capitol, *Art Studies* 1: 78, Princeton [Princeton Univ. Press], 1923.

A critical description of the building in the mid-Victorian period, just before it was pulled down, is interesting:

"The building at the corner of Library Street is a quaint and substantial example of the old style architecture, when substance and solidity were objects of the first importance; and whilst in style there was some little change from the uniformity of plain brick walls, the ornament was such as was easy to be obtained in native marble, with the addition of well-made mouldings in wood, in panel, balustrade, with classic urns. There was breadth and solid ease about the old Philadelphia Library Building, and a peculiarity which distinguished it from any other structure of a public character in the city. The great steps on Fifth Street were of a width and depth of more than ample liberality. They were, in fact, almost a building by themselves, and gave to the lower part of the edifice a solidity which was well assisted by the broad, noble doorway and the heavily faced niche, with ornaments above it. Taken from any point of view this building, although not gorgeous, was striking and respectable, and creditable to the taste which planned it." *Public Ledger*, April 20, 1887, Supplement, 1.

⁶⁹ The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has one of these—a cup plate, 8¾" in diameter, with a rather poorly drawn reverse view in blue transfer and the maker's name J. & W. Ridgway. See Sam Laidacker, *The standard catalogue of Anglo-American China*, Scranton, Pa., 1938.

⁷⁰ £166 9s. 5½d. being "the amount of the Carpenters & Masons bills including materials for inclosing the Lot on the North side of the Library." Library Company Papers, Hist. Soc. Penna., MS Collection 454, November 6, 1794.

\$4.26 for materials and labor.⁷¹ A successful campaign was also conducted to open a view into the State House yard across the street by taking down a section of the brick wall, which had enclosed it for years, and substituting a clairvoyée or open panel of "Iron Palisadoes."⁷² The Yard had recently been landscaped under the direction of Samuel Vaughan with trees, shrubs, and serpentine walks and furnished with Windsor settees.⁷³ It made a pleasant and popular promenade which contributed to the attractiveness of the Library's setting (fig. 9).

THE LIBRARY IN USE

The Library was heated by wood-burning stoves. The account books carry items for the wharfage, hauling, sawing, and splitting of hickory wood bought at 33 shillings per cord and piled in the cellar. The stoves and their pipes were stored in the garret and brought down later in the autumn to be set up, blacked, used for the winter and returned aloft in the spring. There are also items for sweeping the chimneys, shovelling snow, and washing windows. Brass candlesticks were used and "mould candles" bought by the pound. A fine lantern for four candles was purchased for the front entry (fig. 17).⁷⁴ At Christmas time there was regularly a cash present to the watchmen who lighted the lamps.⁷⁵

⁷¹ MPDLC 4: 60 (November 3, 1796). Other evidence of interest in landscaping at this time is shown in book orders for "Langley on Gardening" in 1794 and "Repton's essay on Landscape Gardening" and "Haye's practical treatise on planting, etc." in 1796. The earlier minutes of the Company show that *Switzer's Gardening* and *Perkison's Flower Garden* were ordered from London as early as 1732 and 1733 and that Peter Collinson had presented the volumes of Philip Miller's *Gardener's Dictionary* in 1732-1739.

⁷² MPDLC 3: 341, 342.

⁷³ John Fanning Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia* 1: 397, Phila., 1881. Manasseh Cutler, *Life Journal* 262-263. Sarah P. Stetson, *The Philadelphia sojourn of Samuel Vaughan*, *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 73: 465, 466, 1949.

⁷⁴ Payment to Poultney & Wilson of £2 5s., the Green Store on Market Street, was ordered for the lantern on February 3, 1791. Hist. Soc. Penna., Gratz MS, Case 14, Box 7. The lantern has been preserved and rehung in the Ridgway Branch.

⁷⁵ Various entries, *An Account of Expenses and Loganian Library Minutes*, Bound MS, Library Company of Philadelphia. The stoves are referred to as "soapstone stoves" in a repair item of the year 1800. The Loganian Library was heated by an open stove loaned by Joseph Paschall and for which the Trustees provided a sheet iron hood and andirons.

This was a period of intense interest in heating improvements. Some of the experimentation is reflected in the following items in uncatalogued papers of the Library Company:

Jan. 11, 1794	To Elbow & fitting an old Stove pipe	£0..5..0
	To Setting up a Stove	2..6
Aug. 7, 1794	To putting a handle to the chimney hood	0..1..6
Aug. 14, 1797	To Building fire places in the Library Room	11..5..0
Aug. 15, 1797	To 2 chimney Mantles	4.12..9



FIG. 10. Undated Photograph, ca. 1855? Several photographs of the Library before demolition show details of carpentry and stone cutting in the best Philadelphia tradition. Courtesy of Free Library of Philadelphia.

Random entries in the records gives a number of further details. Shelving was continually added through the years, both against the walls and in the form of free-standing "stalls"—what we would today call "stacks."⁷⁶ The shelving was painted⁷⁷ and some of it protected by wire latticework.⁷⁸ Other features of the rooms were Venetian blinds at the windows⁷⁹ and maps on rollers.⁸⁰ The Director's Room was furnished with a dozen Windsor chairs⁸¹ and its fireplace had an iron back and jambs.⁸² The Loganian annex had two large painted tables and some benches.⁸³ Six leather fire

Nov. 16, 1797	To 3 pairs of andirons	4..2..6
	To 3 bars to lay across the andirons to keep the wood from rolling at/9d pr lb	0.17..3
	To 2 sheet iron fenders 40lb. at 2/6 pr lb	5..0..0
Nov. 27, 1797	199 lbs Sheet lead for hearth	6.12..8
March 17, 1798	2 Stoves of Soap Stone 35 feet 5 Inches each at 7..6 per foot (70 ft 10 I)	\$70.75
	2 chimney Pieces at 8....3d per foot 22 feet	24.20

⁷⁶ MPDLC 3: 350, 352 (1794); 4: 55; 4: 165, 180, 184 (1796, 1803, 1804, 1805).

⁷⁷ Hist. Soc. Penna., MS Collection 454, Library Company Papers (April 3, 1794).

⁷⁸ MPDLC 4: 272. "N & D Sellers for wire work, \$42.93" (January 4, 1810).

⁷⁹ Ibid. 4: 111, supplied by John Rea (January 2, 1800).

⁸⁰ Ibid. 4: 114, supplied by Charles DeKrafft (February 6, 1800).

⁸¹ £ 11.5s. to Joseph Herozey (?) (December 6, 1792) cost £ 5.4s. 8d.

⁸² MPDLC, Cost £5.4s. 8d., 4: 115 (April 3, 1800).

⁸³ Various entries, Minutes and Account Book of the Loganian Library. William Roberts was paid £ 7.17s. 8d. on July 15, 1792, for making and painting the tables, which had locks and keys, and for altering two benches.

buckets bearing the Library's name were purchased by the Librarian to hang ready for emergencies.⁸⁴

The new building was kept closed for three months while its eight thousand books were reinstalled. Opening came on the first day of the year 1791.⁸⁵ This was in time to make a hospitable gesture and "respectful mark of Attention" to President Washington and members of Congress who had just come back to Philadel-



FIG. 11. Original Urn from Roof. One of the seventeen carved wooden urns that ornamented the balustrade on the Library roof has been preserved at the Ridgway Branch. Height, 50½", max. dia. 16½", pedestal modern. Courtesy of National Park Service.

phia for a ten-year sojourn. The Directors of the Library resolved

... that the President and Members of the Senate, and of the House of Representatives of the United States, shall have the free use of the Books in the Library, in as full and ample manner, as if they were Members of the Company.⁸⁶

The First Continental Congress (1774) and the Constitutional Convention (1787) had previously enjoyed the

⁸⁴ MPDLC 4: 64, 65 (1797).

⁸⁵ Notice by Librarian Poulson issued September 23, 1790. *The Pennsylvania Packet and Daily Advertiser*, October 22, 1790. MPDLC 3: 224, 235.

⁸⁶ MPDLC 3: 238, 239 (January 18, 1791).

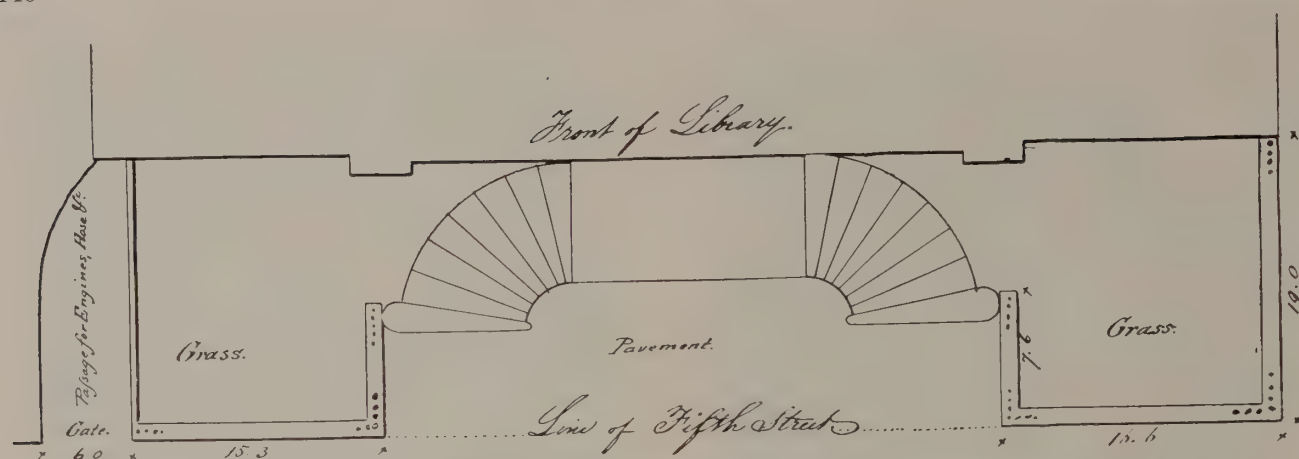


FIG. 12. Architectural plan of the Library Front and Entrance Steps drawn by stonecutter Adam Traquair in 1820. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

same privilege when the Library Company was at Carpenters' Hall. In a sense the Philadelphia Library was thus the parent of the Library of Congress, established 1800.⁸⁷ Tobias Lear, Secretary of the President, punctiliously acknowledged this kindness, assuring the Directors that their letter had "made a proper impression."⁸⁸

The building was open to readers every day from one o'clock to sunset except Sunday.⁸⁹ The short hours were the subject of frequent complaints. One by a lady visitor from New Hampshire signed LITERARY LEISURE appeared in the local *Port Folio*. Disappointed one morning by a locked door she went home and wrote to the editor charging . . .

⁸⁷ *Library of Congress . . . Catalog of the Exhibit Commemorating the 150th Anniversary of Its Establishment*, 1-3, Washington, Library of Congress, 1950.

⁸⁸ *MPDLC* 3: 247 (January 20, 1791).

⁸⁹ Clement Biddle, *The Philadelphia Directory*, xi, Phila., 1791. *Independent Gazetteer*, January 1, 1791.

that no one was permitted to read in a public library till food, and wine, and the fumes of tobacco had, at a late hour in the afternoon, ingeniously pioneered the way to the clear understanding and laborious perusal of any, the most difficult books.⁹⁰

This brought further comment from Samuel Saunter which lends atmosphere to our picture of this institution:

. . . Men may trifle with books, in the afternoon, but they must be *studied* in the morning. Indeed, no one, I believe, in the Philadelphia library, ever *dreams* of any higher effort of his mind, than to gaze with half-shut eyes at Hogarth's prints, or the maps on the wall, to read a magazine or a review, to discuss the intelligence of the last gazette, or quietly sink on the shoulders of the arm chair, and enjoy a long *vision* of the Muses. An English gentleman, a stran-

⁹⁰ *The Port Folio* 2 (27): 209 (Phila., July 10, 1802).



FIG. 13. A Circulating Library, 1804. This copperplate shows English ladies with reading problems in a comparable institution. The borrower at the desk is taking out some amorous novels of a type not popular with the Philadelphia Library directors.

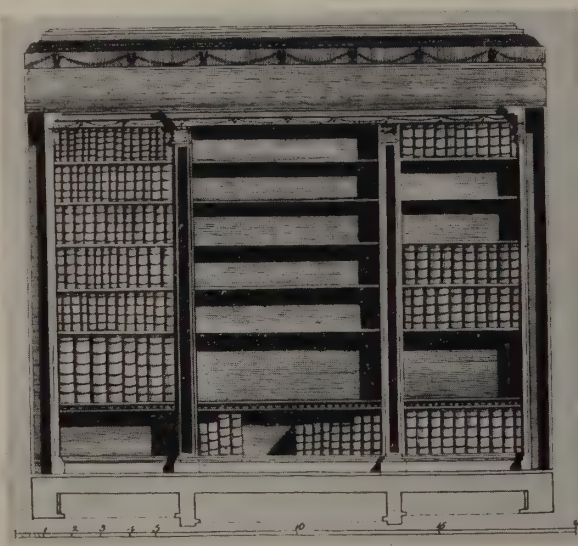


FIG. 14. Library Shelving. The Philadelphia 1797 edition of William Pain's *Practical House Carpenter* included this copperplate (No. 119) of a shelving design. The Library's volumes, like those shown here, were classified, first by size. Courtesy of David Stockwell.



FIG. 15. Interior of Main Building, 1859. Wash Drawing by Colin C. Cooper, Jr., shows the Librarian's desk to the right and behind it an arched opening into the Loganian Library. The building was getting crowded with books in its later years. Courtesy of Free Library of Philadelphia.



FIG. 16. Loganian Library, interior view looking east, 1879. Another drawing by Cooper. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.



FIG. 17. Hall Lantern. Originally purchased from Poultney & Wilson for £2. 5s. and paid for in 1791, this candle lantern has survived and has been rehung in the Ridgway Branch.

ger, ironically complimented me that our library establishment was so far monastic, as not to want a *dormitory*; that under the fervour of a July sun, it was the coolest room in the city for a *nap*, and that, on a late visit, he saw some half dozen hard students, whose studies might be very profound for aught he knew, except that they were occasionally interrupted by a profound *snore*, convulsive twitching, the grinding of the teeth, and other symptoms of the most studious slumber.⁹¹

The philosophical apparatus and the natural curiosities were regularly shown by the Librarian on Saturday mornings. The latter consisted of such items as petrifications and reptiles and insects bottled in "spirits of wine." By special permission of the directors the scientific instruments could be used by parties considered qualified.⁹²

An impressive feature of the artistic furnishings was an elaborate allegory sent from London. Samuel Jennings, a young Philadelphian painting in England, had heard that an elegant building was being put up and wished to contribute a picture that would be "applicable to do so noble and useful an Institution." "Liberty displaying the Arts and Sciences" or "The Genius of America encouraging the Emancipation of the Blacks," as it has been variously called, painted to size in 1792 and sent across the Atlantic, is still preserved and displayed by the Library Company.⁹³

⁹¹ *Op. cit.* In spite of this impression of well-heeled idleness, the Rev. Duché wrote a few years earlier "for one person of distinction and fortune, there were twenty tradesmen that frequented this library." *Caspipina's Letters*, 1, 14, London, 1777.

⁹² Hardie, 1793, 201.

⁹³ *MPDLC* 3: 195-197, 206-207. This painting has been ex-

A clock made by Henry Voight for £27 was another item displayed,⁹⁴ as well as busts of Franklin⁹⁵ and Washington, and a plaster cast of Diana by Houdon presented by a Mr. Dupont.⁹⁶

The eastern end of the cellar was first rented to Israel Whelen, a High Street merchant, and occupied by him December 15, 1791.⁹⁷ This was an old Philadelphia custom. The undersides of Carpenters' Hall, Philosophical Hall, private houses, and even churches were regularly let out for storage.⁹⁸ The fire insurance policy allowed the use of the Library basement for commercial goods, including naval stores, but excluding gunpowder.⁹⁹ No lights were permitted because of fire hazard.

Outdoors, the grounds gradually filled up. In 1805 a "necessary" was added.¹⁰⁰ The Pennsylvania Fire Company in 1816 was granted permission to erect its engine house on Fifth Street front of the lot just north of the Hall.¹⁰¹ Street curb stones were placed on Fifth Street in front of the Library in 1811 and a brick paving along Library Street on the south side.¹⁰² About 1822 the ceiling of the Loganian annex was raised eight feet and the shelving increased.¹⁰³

The early years of the nineteenth century passed quietly and the collections grew. There was only one untoward incident. On January 6 or 7, 1831, during a meeting of the Directors (in an upper room "enjoying their monthly collation of oysters and fish-house punch") the Loganian annex caught fire. The conflagration, which originated in a chimney breast (where a new coal grate had been installed for purposes of fire-safety), was put out with a loss of some books and two por-

terly studied and written up by Robert C. Smith, A Philadelphia allergy, *Art. Bull.* 31 (4): 323-326, December, 1949.

⁹⁴ *MPDLC* 2: 340 (1793).

⁹⁵ *MPDLC* 4: 186 (January 17, 1805).

⁹⁶ *MPDLC* 4: 116 (April 3, 1800).

⁹⁷ Whelen paid a rental of £30 per annum for the cellar but was not allowed to use it for naval stores or oils, or to use a light in it. *Ibid.* 3: 236. The rent was upped to £40 in 1792. *Ibid.* 3: 325. The front cellar was rented for \$120 per year to Harmes & Holtzbecker in 1803 by the "Cellar Committee." *Ibid.* 4: 155. Lorent & Lang followed in 1810. *Ibid.* 4: 274.

⁹⁸ Another basement occupant of the Library (1793) was Joseph Anthony & Son, Chestnut Street merchants. Captain Anthony was later threatened with eviction on account of "the frequent introductions of fire, candles and inflammable articles." *Ibid.* 4: 9. The rear cellar under the Loganian Library was rented to Jacob Shoemaker for \$50 in 1803 (*ibid.* 4: 160), to Elliston and John Perot in 1806 (*ibid.* 4: 219) and C. Danenburg in 1811 (*ibid.* 4: 287).

⁹⁹ Philadelphia Contributionship, Survey Nos. 2414 and 2415.

¹⁰⁰ \$35.25 was paid William Roberts "for building a necessary and finding materials." *MPDLC* 4: 195 (August 8, 1805).

¹⁰¹ *MPDLC* 4: 363 (March 7, 1816). Permission had been granted as early as 1808. *Ibid.* 4: 237. The Resolution Hose Company's application of 1815 was turned down. *Ibid.* 4: 360.

¹⁰² *MPDLC* 4: 295, 296, 298.

¹⁰³ Philadelphia Contributionship, *op. cit.* (December 2, 1811). Mentioned here is the yellow pine floor, gallery for reaching books on west side, 4 stacks or "stands" 12½' long, 8' high, protected with wire panels and a dentil cornice at the ceiling.



FIG. 18. Portion of Wild Lithograph, 1838. A panorama taken from the restored steeple of Independence Hall, shows the front of the Library and two neighboring buildings which still stand: (left foreground) Philosophical Hall and (left background) the Old Custom House, originally the Second Bank of the United States. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

traits.¹⁰⁴ About 1835 a large one-story brick wing of one room was added to the north; this was almost completely filled with stacks.¹⁰⁵ The building at this period is well shown in a lithographic view from the State House steeple drawn by J. C. Wild (fig. 18).

In time the Library outgrew the possibilities of further expansion on the Fifth Street site and in the year 1856 a subscription list was opened for a new fireproof building.¹⁰⁶ A site at Center Square was later consid-

¹⁰⁴ Gray, 38. Scharf and Westcott, 1184. \$2943.55 in insurance was collected, however. Loganian Library Minutes. Philadelphia Contributionship, *op. cit.* (October 6, 1835). The addition was 26' x 41'-6" and 15' high. It had a shed roof covered with tin and was pierced with a long skylight, the sash of which was manipulated by a cord from the floor below.

¹⁰⁵ Philadelphia Contributionship, Insurance Survey 2414 dated October 6, 1835.

¹⁰⁶ Library Company of Philadelphia. *Annual Report*, May, 1879, 3, Philadelphia, 1879.

There are drawings for a new building on the Fifth Street site at the Ridgway Library. One of them is a floor plan by John Notman dated July, 1840.

ered, but it was not until 1880, after a substantial gift had been received, that a site was purchased at Locust and Juniper Streets.

The Library finally moved into *two* buildings, the Ridgway Branch, a new and large granite Doric structure occupied in 1878 under the terms of the Rush bequest¹⁰⁷ and another structure at Locust and Juniper Streets.¹⁰⁸ The latter building was supposed to be something of a reproduction of the old Fifth Street Library, but the resemblance was not striking. The original stone entrance steps were brought up from the old building¹⁰⁹ and the Franklin statue was again set up in a niche over the entrance.

¹⁰⁷ Broad and Christian Streets, finished 1877, cost \$850,000, architect, Addison Hutton. The literal classic porticoes are surprising for this period. See John Harbeson, Philadelphia's Victorian architecture, *Penna. Mag.* 67: 258, 259, July, 1943.

¹⁰⁸ Built 1879-80, architect, Frank Furness. Gray, 67. Scharf and Westcott, 1187.

¹⁰⁹ Gray, 67. These stone steps seem to have disappeared during the demolition of the building in 1940.

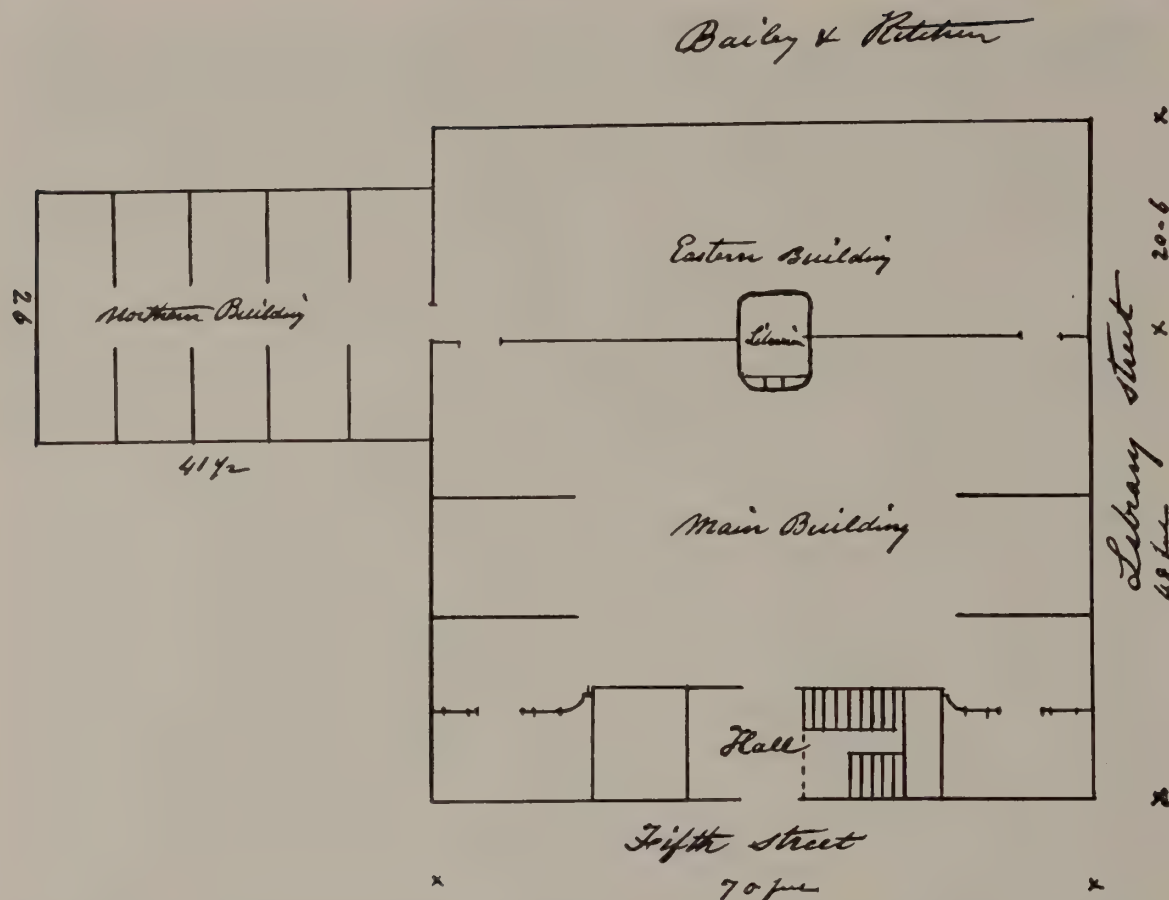


FIG. 19. Floor Plan, 1880. At the time the Library moved out of its old Hall, this fire insurance survey was made to show the floor plan, including the Loganian annex ("Eastern Building") and the North Wing. It is the only known floor plan. Courtesy of Philadelphia Contributionship.

In its last years Dr. Thornton's building was described by Willis P. Hazard:

The present building has a quiet, venerable appearance, and its interior though plain, is impressive. Besides the books, the rooms contain portraits of Lord Bacon, Sir Isaac Newton, William Penn, John Penn, James Logan, Benjamin Franklin, Rev. Samuel Preston, a benefactor (the portrait by West), William Mackenzie, a donor of books, Joseph Fisher, a donor of money, Thomas Parke, Zachariah Poulson, and others. There are various relics, such as William Penn's writing-desk; a colossal bust of Minerva which formerly stood behind the Speaker's chair in the first Congress under the Constitution; a mask of Washington's face from the original and used for Houdon's statue; a reading-desk of John Dickinson, author of *The Farmer's Letters*; James Logan's library-table, and other curiosities.

The collection then totaled over one hundred thousand books—still following the original arrangement of position according to size¹¹⁰ (fig. 14).

The next year the old Library Building was "eviscerated" and on August 8, 1884, it was sold to Anthony J. Drexel.¹¹¹ Not long afterwards the whole structure

was removed for the construction of the Drexel Building which still remains. The *Public Ledger* for April 20, 1887, reported that: "... the workmen are ranging all around it and eager for the hour when the Central News Company under whip and spur will withdraw from the old Library building and another of the ancient landmarks which the Revolutionary Fathers planned will have fallen before the progress of time."¹¹²

APPENDIX I

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON DR. WILLIAM THORNTON

Thornton was born in an English Quaker colony on the island of Jost van Dyke, in what are now the British Virgin Islands, about 1760. He was educated in medicine at the University of Edinburgh and lived for a time

¹¹⁰ John F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia* 3: 339. Phila. (Hazard edition), 1879.

¹¹¹ *Philadelphia Deed Book* JOD 224/123.

¹¹² Other accounts of the Library in its last years are R. A. Smith, *Philadelphia as it is in 1852*, 193-197, Phila., 1852; Edward Strahan, *A century after*, 65, 66 (illus.), Phila., 1875; Rebecca Harding Davis, *Old landmarks in Philadelphia*, *Scribner's Monthly*, 155-156 (illus.), N. Y., 1876; and Louise Stockton, *The old Philadelphia Library*, *Our Continent*, 452-459 (illus.), Phila., October 18, 1882.

in both London and Paris. In 1786 he arrived at New York. Early the next year he was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society and in 1788 he took the national oath of allegiance in New Castle County, Delaware. An invitation to dinner with Dr. Benjamin Franklin on February 17, 1789, shows Thornton was then living "at Mrs. Houses 5th. Street Corner of Market Street," a fashionable Philadelphia boarding house.

That Thornton spent much time working on the invention of the steamboat with John Fitch and others is revealed in a letter he wrote to Robert Fulton from Washington on December 16, 1807:

I was engaged in a Steam Boat several years ago projected by the late John Fitch, who only conceived the Idea of applying Steam to the propelling of Boats, but had never seen a Steam Engine—I believe I was the only person in the Company, who had seen a Steam Engine, but those I saw when very young & they only worked one way. We tried various modes and made an Engine work both ways giving motion first to wheels, then to . . . cranks and Paddles on the sides, but we found all these inconvenient especially when running across the wind and after many modes found the best was by placing Paddles at the Stern—for they were then entirely out of the way, & were always working in the wake of the Boat therefore not subject to any sudden injury from dashing waves or obstructions of any kind.—The Boat which was 60 feet keel went only from 2-1/2 to 3-1/2 miles per hour till I put in a Boiler of abt. 6 feet long by abt. 4 wide of which I was the Inventor, and the same boat with some small alterations then went 8 miles an hour through dead water, time & distance accurately measured frequently & in the presence of hundreds now at Philada.—and it went 80 miles in a Day.—I had then a Schooner built of 25 Tons burthen for the Mississippi & strikg above 90 strokes a minute with the Paddles abt. 7-1/2 fet. at a stroke & with the force of at least 40 men—The Govr. & Council in a Body walked to the Boat & presented us with a superb Flag, as a mark of appreciation. I had then calculated to go ten miles an hour. I prepared all the Material works previous to my setting out for the West Indies to see my Mother but I discovered a disposition in the Company to endeavor to simplify the works—I begged & urged them to adhere minutely to the plan laid down, & by which the other was built, & I departed in confidence that no material deviation would take place.—The King of Spain sent us a Patent or exclusive privilege for the Mississippi, and I promised every success to the plan. I ordered flat bottomed boats to deposit coals every 30 or 40 miles in descendg from Pittsburgh to New Orleans & had laid a Plan which by several Ste[am] Boats would have brought in a very great Profit.—but when I returned from the West Indies instead of findg. the Boats built I found the only two we had executed were sold with the apparatus of every kind; for by innovation, & attemptg to improve the work the Company could not make the Engine strike a stroke, and I declined pursuing an object of the greatest consequence & I give the above to acct for our not continueing with such Partners. (William Thornton Papers, MS, Library of Congress.)

After winning the Library competition and marrying, Thornton returned to the West Indies. By the end of 1792, however, he was back in Philadelphia. His widow later wrote:

On his return he fixed in Philadelphia, where his mother-in-law had engaged & furnished a house [on Chestnut Street] ready for his reception & where he intended & indeed commenced the practice of physic, but it was so disagreeable to him, & he thought the fees so small (having been accustomed to the W. India fees which are very high) that he relinquished the practice & the house, & in consequence of his unfortunate passion for raising horses, took a small place a mile from Phila. where he remained 'till he received from President Washington the honorable appointment of Commissioner of the new City of Washn. or Federal City.

The Doctor moved to Washington late in 1794 and became a well known figure there. He died in 1828.

Not much detail is known of Thornton's life in Philadelphia. The records of the American Philosophical Society show that on November 21, 1789, he was appointed to the Committee on Publications and on January 4, 1793, elected a Councillor for three years. Thornton was present at meetings until 1796, served on various special assignments, and received a prize medal for his essay "Cadmus" on speech and the education of the deaf. He retained his interest in the Society and in 1807 sent it a copy of his essay on yellow fever.

Quakeress Susanna Dillwyn of Burlington and Philadelphia, in letters to her father in England, made two interesting mentions of Thornton in this period. These letters, preserved in the Dillwyn Papers at the Ridgway Library, Philadelphia, relay information from Sally Dickinson, daughter of the Revolutionary patriot:

[September 20, 1789] There is a Doctor Thornton who we became acquainted with at Wilmington, that professes a great attachment to S. N. Dickinson but whether he will be successful in his pursuit is very doubtful—he had his education in England, is acquainted with most parts of Europe and possesses tis said an uncommon share of knowledge for his age—he told me he was intimate with Doctor Lettsom and is I suppose not more of a friend [Quaker] than he. that I suppose would be a principal objection with J.D. who is much more of a friend than formerly. . . .

[January 28, 1790] . . . I had a letter from Sally N. Dickinson which left their family well. Doctor Thornton, a person who long aim'd at a connection there, a few months ago was married to one Anne Burdeau [Brodeau] a young woman in Phila. and in a few days after [October 13, 1790] they embarked for the Island of Tortola. I have heard him say he was well acquainted with Dr. Lettsom, I. and S. Hoare and several others I knew in England—he is a man of a very eccentric turn, and at one time made himself much talk'd of in this country. . . .

The most extensive life of Thornton yet published is Allen C. Clark, "Doctor and Mr. William Thornton" in *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* 18: 144-208, Washington, 1915. See also Fiske Kimball in *Dictionary of American Biography*. Charles F. Jenkins, *Tortola*, 58-63, London, 1923. The principal available sources are the William Thornton and J. Henley Smith manuscript collections in the Library of Congress. Among this material is a valuable biographical sketch by Mrs. Thornton.

APPENDIX II

SOME ARCHITECTURAL BOOKS IN
PHILADELPHIA, 1789

The following list of volumes collected by the Library Company of Philadelphia was available to Dr. William Thornton when he took up his study of architecture and won the competition for the design of the new library. The books are listed as works of "Civil Architecture" on pages 253, 254 in the volume entitled: *A Catalogue of the Books belonging to the Library Company of Philadelphia; to which is prefixed, A Short Account of the Institution, with the Charter, Laws and Regulations* (Phila., 1789).

All of these volumes are still in the possession of the Company and all are in good condition except the Adam work (No. 304) of which only a fragment remains.

FOLIO.

- 1 RULES for drawing the several parts of architecture. By James Gibbs. Third edition. London, 1753.
- 4 Vitruvius Britannicus; or the British architect; containing the plans, elevations and sections of the regular buildings [both publick and private] in Great Britain; with plates. By Colin Campbell. 2 volumes in one.¹
- 7 Ancient masonry; both in theory and practice; demonstrating the useful rules of arithmetic, geometry and architecture; with plates. By B. Langley. 2 vols. London, 1736.
- 9 [Some] Designs for buildings, both public and private; with plates. By James Leoni. London, 1726.²
- 28 A complete body of architecture; [adorned] with plans and elevations from original designs; interspersed with some designs of Inigo Jones, [never before published]. By Isaac Ware. London, 1756.
- 30 A collection of designs in architecture; with designs of stone and timber bridges; and screens and pavilions.
- & By Abraham Swan. 2 vols. London, 1757 and 1767.
- 276 N^o. 276 the gift of David Evans.³
- 41 [The four books of] Andrea Palladio's architecture; with observations that are most necessary in building houses, streets, bridges, piazzas, and temples. By Isaac Ware. London, 1738.⁴
- 68 A treatise of the five orders of columns in architecture. By Claude Perrault. To which is added, a discourse concerning pilasters. Translated from the French, by John James. London, 1708.
- 136 The villas of the ancients; with plates. By Robert Castell. London, 1728.
- 293 The British architect; or builder's treasury of staircases; with plates. By Abraham Swan. London.
- 296 James Gibbs's book of architecture; containing designs of buildings and ornaments. Second edition. London, 1739.
- 304 Works in architecture; with plates. By Robert and James Adam. London, 1773.

QUARTO.

- 106 [Palladio Londinensis: or,] The London art of building; with the builder's dictionary. By William Salmon. Fourth edition. London, 1752.

¹ A copy of this work was first ordered in 1739.

² This volume has the bookplate of William Denny.

³ There are two identical sets of this work, both dated 1757. Evans copy given January 13, 1764.

⁴ A copy of Palladio was first ordered in 1732.

- 150 The British carpenter; or a treatise on carpentry; containing the most concise [and authentick] rules of that art. By Francis Price. Second edition. London, 1735.⁵

OCTAVO.

- 94 The builder's dictionary; or gentleman's and architect's companion; with plates. 2 vols. [n.a.; "Faithfully digested from the most Approved Writers on these subjects."] London, 1734.
- 399 Fires improved; or a new method of building chimneys. Translated from the French of Monsieur Gauger, by J. T. Desaguliers. Second Edition, with an appendix, containing several farther improvements. London, 1736. *Gift of Mr. Grace.*
- 468-1 [Monsieur leComte] D'Espie's manner of securing all sorts of buildings from fire; with plates. London.⁶
- 620 Useful architecture, in designs for erecting parsonage-houses, farm-houses and inns. By William Halpenny. London, 1752.
- 839 City, country-purchasers and builder's dictionary; or the complete builder's guide. By Richard Neves [Neve]. Third edition. London, 1736.⁷
- *1467-3 Oikidia; or nutshells; being ichnographic distributions for small villas; chiefly upon oeconomical principles; with plates. [By Joseph MacPacke, A Bricklayer's Labourer] London, 1785.

DUODECIMO

- 706 A [practical] treatise on chimnies; containing [full] directions for preventing or removing smoke in houses; with plates. [n.a.; revised from account in Encyclopedia Britannica.]

APPENDIX III

FIRE INSURANCE SURVEYS

When the Library building was first completed it was "surveyed" for fire insurance by Gunning Bedford. His report, or survey, preserved for Policy Nos. 2414 and 2415 at the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, reads as follows:

Survey^d. 3^d. Novem^r. 1790.

The Library Hall, situate on the east side of fifth street between Chestnut and walnut Streets—

70 feet by 40 feet, Two Storys high, 14 Inch walls, floors Narrow Boards Nail^d. Through, 2 Rooms in first & 3 D^o. in Second Story, Large Room in first Story is fitted up with Shelves for Books on the Back Side and part of each end, 2 arches, 4 whole and 4 half dorick pilasters and Intaliture [Entablature] over them, dintal Cornice Round, Bass and surbass Round, archatrives to all the doors and windows, and inside Shutters, 3 windows and 2 doors arch^d. and gothick sashes in arch^d. part Square sashes 15 by 11, some brick and some plaster^d. pertions, Bass & Surbass and Stoker [?] Cornice Round in Second Story, Two Storys of open Newel Stairs one of which is Ramp^d. Bracketed scerting and half Rail and open pilasters up the wall, the other Ramp^d. Bracketed & scerting up the wall, modillion & dintal Cornice to Eaves all Round, Hip^d. Roof, pediment

⁵ A copy was ordered in 1739. Present copy bound with Francis Price, *A Supplement to the British Carpenter: Containing Palladio's Orders of Architecture with the Ornament of Doors and Windows, etc.*, London, 1735.

⁶ Published ca. 1755. Copy acquired from Union Library Company.

⁷ A copy was first ordered in 1734.

in front. Balustrade Round Roof with pedestals for and 17 urns which are up, the whole painted inside and out, and New a galery on east side in first Story to gett at the Books—a Circular Inclosure for Librarian, and Two flights of Stairs Neatly finish^d. to the galery.

Gun^s. Bedford

£500. on the North Moiety	} Divided by an imaginary Line running East and West thro' the middle of the House.
£500. on the South Moiety	
£1000. at 42/6	
£500. addl. at 50/	
With Liberty of Naval Stores. (Gunpowder excepted)	

In 1811 another survey was made which describes the Loganian annex in some detail:

I have Surveyed an addition to the Philad^a. Library on the east of the principal Building and adjoining 21 feet wide 70 feet long, one high Story, in one room the floor of yellow pine, Shelved on the west side to the ceiling, and a Gallery about midway of the highth with a plain rail in front, the

east side of the room Shelved about half way up, a large Venetian window in each end, the middle of which are arched, the roof covered with copper, modillion eve, & copper gutter and pipe — a large Skylight in the roof of 12 1/2 feet Square rising to a point — Also a range of Shelving on the west side of the principal room, to the ceiling with two flights of winding steps leading on to a Gallery, with a plain rail in front, the recesses at the North & Southwest corner of the room filled with Shelves, & the cornice with dentil continued round.—also 4 stands for Books on the floor about 12 1/2 feet long & 8^{ft} in highth, each with a division & shelves on both sides—the whole of the shelving with wired doors in front & painted

12 Mo. 2 nd . 1811	John C. Evans
\$800 at 2 1/2 p.Cent	\$20.—
\$4800 at 1 p.Cent	48.00
addl. 1333.33 at 2 1/2	33.33
	<hr/>
	\$101.33 rec'd.—
former Deps. £21.5—	56.67
	<hr/>
	158.—

Later surveys for these policies are dated 1822, 1835, 1852 and 1880.

In 1764 Franklin was appointed agent for the Province of Pennsylvania to the English Government, and on November 7 he left Philadelphia for England.

Before leaving Philadelphia, Franklin commissioned his good friend, Samuel Rhoads, as an agent to supervise the construction of his dwelling.³ Samuel Rhoads' receipt book, 1764 to 1766, in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, and Franklin's ledger, 1764 to 1775, in the American Philosophical Society contain information about the construction of the house. By means of these records, it is learned that Robert Smith, a prominent builder of Philadelphia was the principal carpenter,⁴ William Anderson was the plasterer, and John and Joseph Ledru were the bricklayers. The stone used in the foundations amounted to eighteen perches and was obtained from John Parish's quarry. The bricks for the house were bought from Jacob Graff and the boards and lumber were purchased from Salter Brittain and Company.⁵

send for them." Franklin Papers, Amer. Philos. Soc. This collection is hereafter cited as Franklin Papers (APS).

³ Samuel Rhoads was born in Whitemarsh Township, Philadelphia County, in 1711. He was apprenticed as a carpenter and was an early member of the Carpenters' Company. He became a master builder and later engaged in mercantile pursuits. Rhoads was a member of Franklin's "Junto," and a founder of the American Philosophical Society. As one of the founders of the Pennsylvania Hospital, he drafted the ingenious design for its buildings in 1755. He was also one of the founders, and one of the first directors of the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, and a director of the Philadelphia Library Company. He was Mayor of Philadelphia in 1774, served several years in the Assembly, and was a delegate to the First Continental Congress. Rhoads died in Philadelphia on April 7, 1784. Castner, S., Jr., comp., *The Rhoads family of Pennsylvania*, Phila., George H Buchanan, [1901].

⁴ Robert Smith is said to have been born in Glasgow, Scotland, about 1722 and to have come to Philadelphia at an early age. He soon became the leading builder in Philadelphia and a member of the Carpenters' Company. In addition to designing many prominent buildings, such as Nassau Hall and the president's home at Princeton College; St. Peter's Church, Zion Lutheran Church, Walnut Street Prison, and Old Pine Street Presbyterian Church, all in Philadelphia; he designed and built many homes for private individuals. In 1774, Smith was named to the committee of correspondence, and in 1775 he designed the chevaux-de-frise to block the Delaware River below Philadelphia. He prepared similar defences for Billingsport, New Jersey. He died on February 11, 1777, before his inventions were tested in action. Stacey, C. P., Robert Smith, *Dictionary of American Biography* 17: 335-336.

⁵ An interesting description of the materials used in building is found in an undated and unsigned manuscript memorandum: "Our Materials for Building are, exceeding good well-burnt red Bricks, Stone Lime that with River Sand makes a very good & hard Mortar Pine or Oak Boards and Timber; we have a Coarse Stone for Foundations & Cellar Walls; We have Marble for Slabs & Chimney Pieces, and two or three kinds of coarser Freestone which are rather hard to work. Iron we have, and People to work it, but our Glass & Lead are from England." From a description of the property in the memorandum, it is evident that the house was to be built on Franklin's lot on Mulberry (Arch) Street. Franklin, who either wrote or dictated the memorandum, wished that the proposed three story house

The actual cost of the building cannot be ascertained by means of these sources. In an interesting letter to Samuel Rhoads dated March 30, 1767, however, Robert Smith stated that "According to my Estimate, I suppose for the House &c.: The hewen Stone, and the Boards, Scantling, and some other materials may Amount to £780."⁶

The dates of the construction work on the house cannot be determined, but it is believed that construction was probably begun in the fall of 1764, since the first entry in Rhoads' receipt book records the receipt of £200 from Benjamin Franklin on November 13, 1764. The laborer, Michael Coon, who dug the foundation for the house, however, was not paid for his six days' work until June 19, 1765.⁷

It is evident that the construction work was not carried on as rapidly as Franklin wished, and he complained to his wife about the slowness of the workmen. In a letter of May 11, 1765, he wrote that he hoped "by this time you are nearly settled in your new House; tho' when I consider the slowness of Workmen, I rather question whether you will be so before I return."⁸ Again, on June 4, 1765, Franklin wrote to his wife:

I cannot but complain in my Mind of Mr. Smith, that the House is so long unfit for you to get into, the Fences not put up, nor the other necessary Articles got ready. The Well I expected would have been dug in the Winter or early in the Spring; but I hear nothing of it.⁹

On February 10, 1765, Mrs. Franklin wrote that fire places had come from London and were being installed, "The darke one is in the parlor. . . ." She hoped that the hearths would soon be laid. The plasterer was finishing the lathing of the stair cases, and she was busy getting the "lore [lower] parte of the house clenod ought readey for the laying the Kitching flore[floor]. . . ." In the same letter, under date of February 17, she wrote that George, Franklin's servant, and herself "have bin att the New house a geting the roomes readey for the painter as Mr. Hadock ses he hope he shall get to work in march. . . ." The hearths had not been laid, but she hoped to get them in immediately so a fire could be made "to prevent the painters casing aney dammaig. . . ." ¹⁰

The house was sufficiently completed for Mrs. Franklin to move into it sometime in May, 1765,¹¹ but much

should be "considered as a kind of Pattern House by future Builders, within the Power of Tradesmen & People of moderate circumstances to imitate and follow." Franklin Papers (APS) 50: 18.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Samuel Rhoads, "Franklin's Receipt Book, 1764-1766." Ms. in possession of the Hist. Soc. of Penna.

⁸ Franklin Papers (APS).

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Deborah Franklin to Benjamin Franklin, dated February 10, 17, 21, 1765, in the Bache Collection, Amer. Philos. Soc. Hereafter cited as Bache Collection (APS).

¹¹ Mrs. Franklin wrote her husband on August 1, 1765, that she had moved into the house "by degrees" in May.

still remained to be done. The penthouses, or weather-shields, appear to have been particularly bothersome. These items are mentioned in several letters from Mrs. Franklin to her husband. In a long letter describing the house, probably written in the fall of 1765, she wrote that the "pente houses is not dun nor the steptes. . . ." ¹² On October 9, 1765, she reported that the "pente houses is as they was. . . ." ¹³ Some time later, in an undated letter, Mrs. Franklin wrote that "the pente houses is dun I paid above tin poundes for shingeles and sum other thinges so you see that when a house is dun their is much to be dun after. . . ." ¹⁴ These penthouses are, apparently, the "2 Large painhouses with trusses at each end" mentioned in the insurance survey of Franklin's home dated August 5, 1766. ¹⁵

The exact location of Franklin's home is not known, but certain recorded facts indicate its approximate location. In the first place, it must be remembered that when the construction of the house was begun, Franklin owned a strip of land only sixty-six feet wide. He did not acquire the additional thirty-three feet on the east until September 26, 1765. In Deborah Franklin's letter to her husband, dated August 1, 1765, mention was made of the pleasing situation of the house on the lot, "as it dos make a fine Squair and an equil spais on each side [of] your house. . . ." ¹⁶ It appears probable, therefore, that the house was located in the center of the sixty-six foot lot and slightly west of the center of the later enlarged lot.

The approximate distance from the house to Market Street can also be determined from the sources. It is evident that the house did not stand on Market Street, for the Rev. Manasseh Cutler noted in his journal in 1787 that Franklin's house stood "up a court-yard at some distance from the street." ¹⁷ More exact information on the location of the house was given by Colonel Carr: "On the South side of the house there was a grass lot, about one hundred feet square. . . . On the North side of the house there was an open lot of the same size extending to the printing office. . . ." ¹⁸

This information would indicate, therefore, that Franklin's house was situated approximately one hundred feet north of the southern boundary, and about two hundred feet south of Market Street. Archeological investigation of the site should be able to ascertain the exact location of the house.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Insurance Survey No. 1148, dated August 5, 1766, Philadelphia Contributionship.

¹⁶ Bache Collection (APS).

¹⁷ Cutler, William Parker, and Julia Perkins, *Life, journals and correspondence of Rev. Manasseh Cutler, LL.D. by his grandchildren* 1: 267, Cincinnati, R. Clarke, 1888.

¹⁸ Carr, Col. Robt., Personal recollections of Benjamin Franklin, *The Hist. Mag.* 4: 60 (2nd ser.), Aug. 1868. This memoir is hereafter cited as Carr's "Recollections."

Contemporary maps of the City of Philadelphia are of little assistance in locating the house. The Easburn map, published in 1776, shows an entrance to Franklin's property, but there is no indication of a building which might be the house. John Hill's map of Philadelphia, published in 1796, does show a building in the approximate location of the house, but it is slightly west of the proper site. In fact, the building which might have been intended for Franklin's house is shown overlapping the buildings to the west. This condition is clearly contrary to the known facts.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSE, 1765-1786

Considering the widespread prominence of Benjamin Franklin, and the numerous visitors to his home, it is odd that no contemporary sketch, drawing, or painting of his house on Market Street has been found.

Still more baffling to a researcher is the lack of adequate plans for the interior of the house, or of any architectural elevations of its exterior. This lack of plans is surprising since the house was apparently designed by Franklin, and he arranged to have plans carried out when he went to England. Furthermore, mention is made in Franklin's correspondence of at least two plans of the house in his possession. ¹⁹ The only document now in the American Philosophical Society's Franklin Papers which may be a plan of the house is an intriguing outline of a plan in pencil on the back of a receipt for paper under date of May 17, 1764. ²⁰ Although the sketch has no notations identifying it, and no dimensions are shown, it does correspond with the fragments of information known about the house. Additional research may prove that it is a plan of Franklin's home.

Fortunately, there is much incidental information on which an approximate description of the house can be based. The fact that Franklin was in England during the construction of the house led to an exchange of letters, more than a score of which have survived, which give some information on the buildings and its furnishings.

In addition, the insurance survey of the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire dated August 5, 1766, briefly describes the house. This valuable record describes the house, "Belonging to Benjamin Franklin, Situate on the South

¹⁹ On September 22, 1765, Mrs. Franklin sent her husband a "drafte of the house and lott" drawn by her brother. Bache Collection (APS). Also in a letter to his wife dated October 11, 1766, Franklin wrote that he had previously asked his wife "to get Mr. Rhoads to send me a little Sketch of the Lot & Wall; but I have since found one he sent me before, so it is not necessary. . . ." Smyth, Albert Henry, ed., *The writings of Benjamin Franklin* 4: 465, N. Y., Macmillan, 1905-1907.

²⁰ Although it is too sketchy to be definitive, this plan in the Franklin Papers, if it is a contemporary plan of the house, does raise doubts regarding the correctness of the conjectural plans developed in 1935 by William Jones Smith, an architect of Chicago, Illinois. Mr. Smith's plans have been deposited in the Yale University Library and the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia.

Side of High Street Between third & fourth Streets where his family dwells," as follows:

34 feet Square—3 Storys high—14 & 9 inch walls—3 Rooms on a floor—partitions in the easternmost part of the house 9 inch Brick wall to the Garret floor in the westernmost part Studded & plasterd—East Room below wainscuted with frett Cornish all Round,—four pedements with frett Bedmolds A

Rich Chimney peice,—fluted Cullums & half pilasters with intablature—the other other Rooms and passage below wainscuted pedestal high, with frett and dintal Cornish throughout one of sd. Rooms has a Chimney peice with tabernacle frame pediment &c.—All the Second Story wainscuted pedestal high, frett dintal and plain duple Cornish through the whole,—a Chimney peice and one of the Rooms with tabernacle frame pediment &c.—Chimney Brest Surbase

Survey. & Augth 1766 N. 440

A house belonging to Benjamin Franklin, situate on the South side of High Street Between third & fourth Streets where his family dwells—

34 feet Square—3 Storys high—14 & 9 inch walls—3 Rooms on a floor—partitions in the easternmost part of the house 9 inch Brick wall to the Garret floor in the westernmost part Studded & plasterd ^{with frett Cornish} East Room below wainscuted ^{with frett Cornish} all Round,—four pediments with frett Bedmolds A Rich Chimney peice, & fluted Cullums & half pilasters with intablature—the other other Rooms and passage below wainscuted pedestal high, with frett and dintal Cornish throughout one of the Rooms has a Chimney peice with tabernacle frame pediment &c.

All the Second Story wainscuted pedestal high, frett dintal and plain duple Cornish through the whole, ~~one~~ a Chimney peice in one of the Rooms with tabernacle frame pediment &c.—

Chimney Brest Surbase—Selecting and single Cornish through the Third Story—Garret plasterd away out on Roof—two Storys of stairs Rampd Brackited and wainscuted—~~one~~ do—Brackited—painted inside and out—

Modilion eaves—2 large painhouses with triforc at each end—all New—Kitchen in cellar—

Gunning Bedford
\$500. ad val of C. or if
any higher sum to be at 92/6.

FIG. 2. Fire Insurance Survey of Franklin's House, 1766. Courtesy of The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire.

Scerting [?] and Single Cornish throughout the third Story—Garet plasterd a way out on Roof—two Storys of Stairs Rampd Brackited and Wainscuted—One—do—Brackited—painted inside and out—Modilion Eaves—2 Large pain-houses with trusses at each end—all New—kitchen in Celler—²¹

Another description of the house was given in the reminiscences of Colonel Robert Carr, written in 1864, but his testimony is of doubtful value because of the great period of time which had passed since he had seen the house. While giving full weight to this consideration, it appears that Colonel Carr's memory was very clear, and his recollection of the house agrees generally with the facts found in contemporary documents. His description, therefore, should not be totally discounted.

Colonel Carr, who served his apprenticeship under Benjamin Franklin Bache in Franklin Court in the 1790's, described the situation of Franklin's house as follows:

The Doctor's mansion-house was in the centre of a lot of ground, midway between Third and Fourth-streets, about one hundred feet wide, and extending from Market to Chestnut-streets. A court, or alley, ten feet wide, called "Franklin Court," extended from Market-street to the rear of the house, which was built with the front towards Chestnut-street, but, some time after it was erected, it was discovered that the title to the front of the lot on Chestnut-street was defective; and the Doctor, rather than engage in a litigation, or pay an exorbitant price demanded by the claimant of the lot, abandoned it, and used the Market-street avenue. This fact I heard Mr. B. F. Bache, his grandson, relate to Mr. Volney, the traveller, who enquired why the Doctor had built his house fronting the South, to which he had not outlet.²²

Colonel Carr also wrote an interesting description of the house:

A plain brick building, three stories high, about forty feet front, thirty feet deep, with an entry through the centre. There was a large parlor on the East side of the Entry, and two rooms on the West side, with a door between them. . . . The Doctor's office or study was the Northwest room on the first floor; and there was a coal grate, in which he burned Virginia or English coal. Below this grate, on the hearth, there was a small iron plate or trap-door, about five or six inches square, with a hinge and a small ring to raise it by. When this door or valve was raised, a current of air from the cellar rushed up thru the grate to re-kindle the fire.²³

Colonel Carr continued by describing Franklin's bed chamber, the "Southwest room on the second floor."

²¹ The rate of insurance on the house was set at 30 shillings per £100 for £500. A note was added: "or if any higher Sum to be at 32/6." Insurance Survey No. 1148, August 5, 1766, Philadelphia Contributionship. The policy for £500 was issued by the Contributionship on February 20, 1767.

²² Carr's "Recollections," 59. Col. Carr was in error about Franklin Court "extending from Market to Chestnut-streets"; it is known that the court extended only 306 feet southward from Market. Comte de Volney, who knew Franklin in France, stayed in Philadelphia during the winter of 1795-96. No mention of Franklin's house could be found in Volney's writings.

²³ *Ibid.*

Franklin apparently installed some of his "contrivances" in his bedroom, for Colonel Carr recalled that there were two cords "like bell-pulls, at the head of his bed; one was a bell-pull, and the other, when pulled, raised an iron bolt almost an inch square, and nine or ten inches long which dropped through staples at the top of the door, when shut; and until this bolt was raised the door could not be opened."

Colonel Carr also recalled that the "doors of the chambers, and nearly all the doors about the house, were lined or edged with green baize, to prevent noise when shutting; and several of them had springs between them to close them."²⁴ These inventions, or conveniences, are certainly in keeping with Franklin's character, and therefore, lend an air of authenticity to Colonel Carr's account.

The best contemporary description of the house was found in a letter, probably written in the fall of 1765, from Deborah Franklin to her husband. In this letter Mrs. Franklin described, in a rather haphazard manner, the arrangement of the house and the furnishings in each room. Because of its detailed information, it is quoted at length:

When you went from home, Billy desired to take some more of your books than what you laid out, so I got him a trunk to take them up in; and as the shelves look pretty empty, I took down the rest and dusted them, and had the shelves taken down and put up in the south garrets in the new house, and Miss Elmer and myself put them up. I took all the dead letters and papers that were in the garret and put them into boxes, barrels, and bags, and I did not know in what manner you would have shelves in your room. Now this I did for several reasons: One, as it did employ my mind and keep me very busy, and as the weather was pretty good, and I should make room if Mrs. Franklin [Mrs. William Franklin?] should come to town to stay any time, I was ready to receive her. Now for the room we call yours: there is in it your desk, the harmonica made like a desk, a large chest with all the writings that were in your room downstairs, the boxes of glass for musick and for the electricity, and all your clothes and the pictures, as I don't drive nails lest it should not be right. Salley has the south room two pair of stairs; in it is a bed, a bureau, a table, a glass and the picture she used to have in her room, a trunk and books, but these you can't have any notion of. The north room Nancy took for her own use, and I can't tell much about it, only it has a bed and curtains, and it is kept locked. I never saw it but once, I think, except when she was ill. The blue room has the harmonica and the harpsichord in it, the gilt sconce, a card-table, a set of tea-china I bought since you went from home, the worked chairs and screen, a very handsome mahogany stand for the tea-kettle to stand on, and the ornamental china; but the room is not as yet finished, for I think the paper has lost much of the bloom by pasting of it up, therefore, I thought best to leave it till you came home: the curtains are not made, nor did I press for them, as we had a very great number of flies, as it is observed they are very fond of new paint. The south room I sleep in, with my Susannah, a bed without curtains, a chest of drawers, a table, a glass and old black-walnut chairs, some books in my closet, and some of our family pictures. In the front room, which I designed for guests, I had the bed which you sent from England, a chamber

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 59-60.

mahogany table and stand: in the room downstairs is the sideboard that you bespoke, which is very handsome and plain, with two tables made to suit it, and a dozen of chairs also. I sold to Mr. Foxcroft the tables we had, as they did not suit the room by any means. The patterns of the chairs are a plain horsehair, and look as well as a paddusoy; everybody admires them. The little south room I had papered, as the walls were much soiled; in that is a pretty card-table and our chairs that used to stand in the parlour, and ornamental china over the fire-place; on the floor, a carpet I bought cheap for the goodness; it is not quite new. The large carpet is in the blue room; the fire not made yet. In the room for our friends the picture of the Earl of Bute is hung up, and a glass. This is but a very imperfect account. In the parlour there is a Scotch carpet which was found much fault with, and your timepiece stands in one corner, which is all wrong, I am told; so then I tell them we shall have all these as they should be when you come home. As to curtains, I leave it to you to do as you like yourself; or if, as we talked before you went away, if you could meet with a Turkey carpet I should like it, but if not I shall be very easy, as all these things are become quite indifferent to me at this time; but since you do so kindly inquire what things I want, I will tell you that when Mrs. Franklin came to town and went to the assembly, Salley had nothing fit to wear suitable to wait on her; and as I never should have put on in your absence any thing good, I gave Salley my new robe as it wanted very little altering: I should be glad if you would bring me a plain satin gown, and if our cousin would make me a little lace of a proper width for a cape or two, I should like it as it was their making, and a light cloke such as you sent for Salley, but it must be bigger than hers. I should have had that, but it was too small for me. In the north room we sit, as it is not quite finished yet, as the doors are not up; we have a table and chairs, and the small bookcase, brother John's picture, and the king and queen's picture, and a small Scotch carpet on the floor. I desire you to remember drinking-glasses and a large table cloth or two when you come, but I shan't want them till then. If you should meet with a pair of silver canisters I should like it; but as you please, everything I have mentioned. When I say doors, it is the closet doors; they are glazed, but it was unknown to me; they are in your room. The crane was put up this week, and not before; the rails not done as yet, but promised soon to be done. O my child, there is great odds between a man's being at home and abroad; as everybody is afraid they shall do wrong, so every thing is left undone.

I have counted the panes in the doors; there are eight in each door, besides the pieces at top the largest size. I will get Mr. Rhodes to take measure of the fireplaces and the pier for a glass. All the chimneys that I have used are very good. I have baked in the oven, and it is good. The same man lives in [the] house that did where [when?] I bought it, but I don't know his name. He paid 26 pounds a-year, but now the lot is taken off, but he's never spoke to me, nor, as he is a Dutchman, I have not spoke to him, only to make a water-tube [tub?] for the area. The pest-house [pent-house?] is not done, nor the steps, as the lot is not settled. I fear you have not received all my letters. I told you Mr. Rhodes thought it best not to dig a vault, but I shall see him this evening if I can, but I don't go out anywhere if I can help it.²⁵

²⁵ [Duane, William, ed.], *Letters to Benjamin Franklin, from his family and friends, 1751-1790*, 23-27, N. Y., C. Benjamin Richardson, 1859. Mr. Duane corrected Mrs. Franklin's unique spelling, and inserted punctuation. The transcription, which

An attempt has been made to apply the information found in these descriptions to the plan found in the Franklin Papers, but it soon became apparent that it was impossible to reconcile the descriptions and the plan. The plans developed by Mr. Smith (see footnote 20) were also studied, but again reconciliation was impossible. The available information raises many questions which cannot be answered at this time. It is hoped that further historical research, and archeological investigation of the site, may provide some of the answers.

One of the first problems encountered in the study was the question regarding the direction in which Franklin's house faced. Colonel Carr specifically stated that the house faced Chestnut Street, instead of Market Street, but this seemed illogical. No mention of Franklin's intention to purchase the Chestnut Street properties could be found in contemporary documents. Furthermore, a branch of Dock Creek ran along the southern and southeastern boundaries of Franklin's property, and it would constitute a barrier to a southern entrance. Colonel Carr's recollection, on the other hand, seemed to be partially substantiated by Franklin himself. In a letter to his wife, dated June 8, 1765, Franklin mentioned the advisability of "opening a Passage by the North Front of our House into the back Ground. . . ." ²⁶ A definite solution of the problem could not be made from the available information, but the weight of evidence appears to favor somewhat Colonel Carr's memory of the house.

The house, according to the insurance survey, was thirty-four feet square, built of brick, three stories high, with three rooms to the floor, and the kitchen in the cellar. It also had two "large painhouses [penthouses] with trusses at each end." ²⁷ A chimney stood at each end of the building, and the house was covered with wooden shingles.²⁸

The information available on the interior of the house was also incomplete and confusing. Much of the description by Gunning Bedford, the surveyor for the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire, was naturally devoted to

has been compared with the original letter in the Bache Collection (APS), is otherwise very accurate.

"Billy" was Franklin's son, William, the last royal governor of New Jersey; "Sally" was Franklin's daughter, Sarah, who married Richard Bache; "brother John" was John Read, brother of Mrs. Franklin; Susannah was Mrs. Franklin's servant; and "Nancy" has not been identified.

²⁶ Franklin Papers (APS).

²⁷ Survey No. 1148, August 5, 1766, Philadelphia Contributionship.

²⁸ These suppositions regarding the chimneys and roof are based on Franklin's inquiry regarding "the Passage out to the Top of the House." In this letter, apparently written late in 1765, he asked his wife if the passage had been "finished with Iron Rails from Chimney to Chimney." Franklin Papers (APS) 46 (2): 92.

the construction details of the house instead of the arrangement of the rooms.²⁹

All of the sources agree that the kitchen was in the cellar of the house. The cellar probably had the same dimensions as the house, i.e., thirty-four feet square, and the kitchen apparently occupied all of this space. This supposition is based on the fact that Franklin mentioned kitchen chimneys, instead of chimney, in his correspondence.³⁰

Franklin also planned the installation of "vaults," but Mr. Rhoads advised against excavating for them since it might damage the walls of the house.³¹ When advised of Mr. Rhoads' views, Franklin instructed his wife to "let the Vaults alone till my Return."³² He believed that since Mrs. Franklin had a wood yard, they might not be necessary. This would indicate that the "vaults" were to be used for the storage of fire wood. Perhaps the "vaults" were installed later by Franklin, and they may have been the icehouse which Colonel Carr remembered as being under the kitchen.³³

The equipment of the kitchen appears to have included several innovations. Franklin wrote to his wife regarding the kitchen: "I could have wished to have been present at the finishing of the kitchen, as it is a mere Machine and, being new to you, I think you will scarce know how to work it; the several Contrivances to carry off Steam & Smell and Smoke not being fully explained to you." In addition to these "Contrivances" which may have been Franklin's inventions, he inquired in the same letter about the oven which he supposed "was put up by the written directions in my former letter."³⁴ Mention was also made of "the furnace." His brief note on the subject, however, does not identify its nature: "You mention nothing of the furnace. If that iron one is not set, let it alone till my return, when I shall bring a more convenient copper one. . . ."³⁵

Because of these "Contrivances," Franklin was worried about the performance of the kitchen chimneys. Since no mention of them was made by his wife, Franklin believed she was sparing him "some Mortification,"

²⁹ Survey No. 1148, August 5, 1766, Philadelphia Contributionship.

³⁰ Letter to Deborah Franklin, dated London, July 13, 1765, Franklin Papers (APS).

³¹ Deborah Franklin to Benjamin Franklin, October 9, 1765, Bache Collection (APS).

³² Benjamin Franklin to Deborah Franklin, February 27, 1766, Franklin Papers (APS).

³³ Carr's "Recollections," 59.

³⁴ These directions had evidently been given to a Mr. Roberts for Franklin in a letter to his wife dated July 13, 1765, stated: "I wonder you put up the Oven without Mr. Roberts's Advice, as I think you told me he had my old Letter of Directions." Franklin Papers (APS). Unfortunately, these directions have been lost and nothing can be found regarding the details of this oven.

³⁵ Letter to Deborah Franklin dated London, June 4, 1765, *ibid.*

but he insisted on knowing how they worked.³⁶ His mind was probably eased when he learned that "all the Chimneys I have yoused is very good I have baked in the oven and it is good. . . ."³⁷

The first floor of the house, according to Colonel Carr, had "an entry through the centre" with a large parlor to the east and two smaller rooms to the west of this entry.³⁸

This arrangement of the rooms is corroborated by the insurance survey which described the east room as "wainscoted pedistal high, with frett Bedmolds" and a "Rich Chimney peice" which had "fluted Cullums & half pilasters with intabliture." The other rooms and passages on the first floor were wainscoted "pedistal high, with frett and dintal cornish throughout." One of these rooms had a chimney piece "with tabernacle frame pediment &c."³⁹

Deborah Franklin in her letter quoted above, called one of these rooms, "the Blew Room." This particular room was mentioned frequently in Franklin's correspondence. On February 14, 1765, Franklin sent from London some "blue Mohair Stuff" for the curtains of the blue room, together with full instructions on hanging them: "The Fashion is to make one Curtain only for each Window. Hooks are sent to fix the Rails by at Top, so that they make be taken down on occasion."⁴⁰ Franklin believed that the room had not been decorated properly and almost wished he had left directions not to paint the house until he returned. In a later letter, he sent detailed instructions regarding the decoration of the blue room:

I suppose the blue Room is too blue, the Wood being of the same Colour with the Paper, and so looks too dark. I would have you finish it as soon as you can, thus. Paint the Wainscot a dead white; Paper the Walls blue, & tack the Gilt Border round just above the Surbase and under the Cornish. If the Paper is not equal Coloured when pasted on, let it be brush'd over again with the same colour: and let the Papier machée musical Figures be tack'd to the middle of the Cieling; when this is done, I think it will look very well.⁴¹

From Mrs. Franklin's description of the furnishings in the room, it is thought that the room was the parlor. Apparently, it was one of the two western rooms. The amount of furnishings in the room would indicate that the large room on the east side of the house was the dining room.

The other room on the first floor was apparently Dr. Franklin's study, which is called "the room we call

³⁶ Letter to Deborah Franklin, dated London, July 13, 1765, *ibid.*

³⁷ Undated letter of Deborah Franklin to Benjamin Franklin in the Bache Collection (APS).

³⁸ Carr's "Recollections," 59.

³⁹ Survey No. 1148, August 5, 1766, Philadelphia Contributionship.

⁴⁰ Letter to Deborah Franklin in Franklin Papers (APS).

⁴¹ Letter to Deborah Franklin, dated London, June 22, 1767, in *ibid.*

yours" in Deborah Franklin's letter. If Colonel Carr was correct in his recollection of this house, the northwest room on the first floor was the study.⁴² The southwest room, then, was the so-called blue room.

The second floor was wainscoted "pedestal high" with "frett dintal and plain duble cornish through the whole." A chimney piece, as well as one of the rooms, had a "tabernacle frame pediment &c." The third floor, on the other hand, had a "chimney Brest Scerting [skirting?] and Single Cornish throughout."⁴³

The rooms on the second and third floors appear to have been used largely as bedrooms. One room was set aside for guests, and three rooms were the bedrooms

ished with Iron Rails from Chimney to Chimney."⁴⁴

Franklin also installed lightning rods on the roof as additional protection against fire. In a letter to Marsilio Landriani on October 14, 1787, Franklin wrote that the house had been struck by lightning while he was abroad. When he built the addition to his house in 1786, the conductor was taken down. It was discovered that the copper point "had been almost all melted and blown away, very little of it remaining attached to the iron rod."⁴⁵

The furnishings in the house in 1765-1766 were described in detail by Mrs. Franklin. Additions were made to these furnishings from time to time by Dr. Franklin while in England. He mentioned the pur-

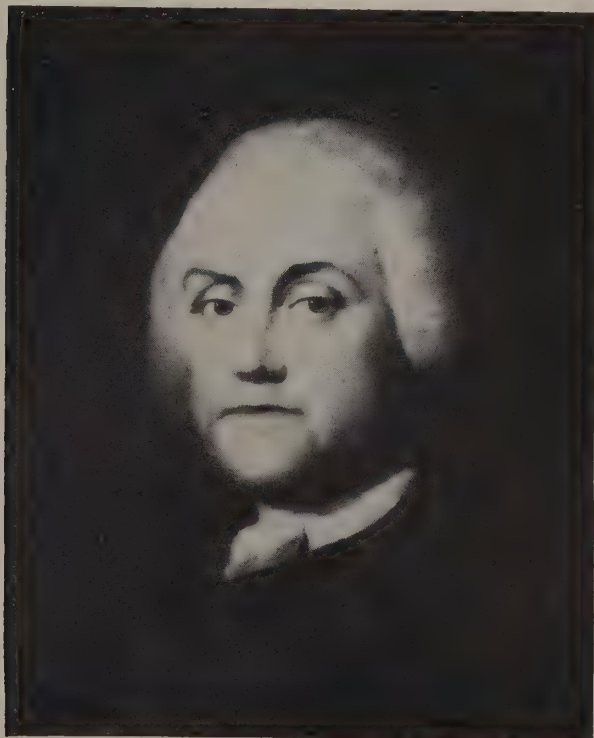


FIG. 3. Benjamin Franklin by Benjamin Wilson, 1759. Upon the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British this portrait was removed from Franklin's house by Captain André and carried to England. It was returned to America in 1906 by Earl Grey and is now in the White House, Washington, D. C.



FIG. 4. Deborah Read Franklin by Matthew Pratt. This portrait was also in Franklin's house. It is now owned by the American Philosophical Society.

for Mrs. Franklin, her daughter, Sarah, and Nancy. One of the rooms, called the "north room" may have served as an upstairs sitting room, but this is a mere supposition.

The house also had a garret from which a passage way led to the roof. This passage was probably a trap door which would provide access to the roof for fire fighting. Franklin mentioned "the passage out to the top of the house" in a letter to his wife, and asked if it "was fin-

chase of "A large true Turkey Carpet cost 10 Guineas," damask table cloths and "Crimson Morir for Curtains with Tassels" in a letter of April 6, 1766.⁴⁶ Other items were shipped periodically to furnish his home.

The furnishings were apparently sold after Dr. Franklin's death, and the following advertisement listed the various items in the house:⁴⁷

⁴⁴ Undated letter of Franklin to his wife in the Franklin Papers (APS) 46 (2): 92.

⁴⁵ Letter quoted in Van Doren, Carl, *Benjamin Franklin's autobiographical writings*, 685, N. Y., Viking, 1945.

⁴⁶ Benjamin Franklin to Deborah Franklin, dated London, April 6, 1766. Smyth, Albert Henry, ed., *The writings of Benjamin Franklin* 4: 449, N. Y., Macmillan, 1905-1907.

⁴⁷ *Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.* 23: 123, 1899. Original document is in the New-York Historical Society.

⁴² Carr's "Recollections," 60.

⁴³ Survey No. 1148, August 5, 1766, Philadelphia Contributionship.

This Day
At 10 o'Clock
At the House of the late DR. FRANKLIN, up
Franklin Court, Market Street
Will Be Sold, by Public Vendue,

A variety of valuable Furniture and Plate consisting of MAHOGANY Side-Board, Dining, Card and Pembroke Tables; Mahogany chairs; Looking Glasses; Cloath's Presses; Tea Urns, Plated candle-sticks; Windsor chairs, an elegant Sopha; chintz Window Curtains; Chests of Drawers; a Forte Piano; a Harpsicord; a Copying Press; circular and other Coal Grates; Franklin Stoves; China; Queen's Ware; Brass Handirons; Shovels and Tongs; Plated Knives and Forks; &c.

SILVER AND PLATED WARE.

Waiters, Sugar Cannisters, Snuffers and Stand, a dish cross, Tea and Coffee Pots, Cruet-Frame and Castors, Candesticks, Sauce-pans, Butter-Ladles, Wine-Strainer, Funnels, Tureen, with handsome Glass of elegant workmanship, Milk-Pots, &c. &c.

Sundry, KITCHEN FURNITURE:

Also A SEDAN CHAIR.

The goods may be viewed on Thursday & Friday by applying as above.

RICHARD FOOTMAN, Auctioneer.

21st May, 1792

This comfortable home had been built for almost a decade before Franklin first saw it. He did not leave England until March 20, 1775. He reached Philadelphia on May 5, 1775, and on that day saw his home for the first time. During his long absence in England, his wife, Deborah, had died on December 19, 1774, and his daughter, Sarah, had married Richard Bache.⁴⁸ The Bache family occupied Franklin's home at the time of his arrival, and they continued to live with him until his death in 1790.

Franklin did not long enjoy his home after his return in 1775. On September 26, 1776, Congress decided to send a commission of three to negotiate a treaty with France. Franklin was one of the three commissioners chosen by Congress. He left Philadelphia on October 26, 1776, and arrived in France on December 4, 1776. He did not return to Philadelphia until September 14, 1785.

During the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777-1778, the Baches moved to the country and Captain John André was quartered in Franklin's house. Prior to the Baches' departure, Franklin's library was "well packed in boxes" and sent out of town. In addi-

⁴⁸ Richard Bache was a native of Yorkshire, England, where he was born in 1737. In 1765 he followed his brother to New York, becoming his business partner. He soon moved to Philadelphia where he met Franklin's only daughter, Sarah, whom he married in 1767. Political differences during the Revolution dissolved the business partnership. Bache was a staunch Patriot and served as a member of the Committee of Correspondence and the Board of War. In 1775 he succeeded his father-in-law as postmaster general and remained in that office until 1782. He died in 1811. Alden, Edmund Kimball, Richard Bache, *Dictionary of American biography* 1: 464.

tion, the Baches carried "all the valuable things, mahogany excepted" with them to the country.⁴⁹

The British appear to have done little damage to the house and its furnishings. The condition of the house after the evacuation of Philadelphia by the British was described by Richard Bache in a letter to Benjamin Franklin dated July 14, 1778:

... I found your house and furniture upon my return to town in much better order than I had any reason to expect from the hands of such a rapacious crew; they stole and carried off with them some of your musical instruments, viz., a Welsh harp, ball harp, the set of tuned bells which were in a box, viol-de-gambe, all the spare armonica glasses, and one or two spare cases; your armonica is safe. They took likewise the few books that were left behind, the chief of which were Temple's schoolbooks, and the history of the Arts and Sciences in French, which is a great loss to the public; some of your electric apparatus is missing also. A Captain André also took with him the picture of you which hung in the dining-room. The rest of the pictures are safe, and met with no damage, except the frame of Alfred, which is broke to pieces; in short, considering the hurry in which we were obliged to leave the town, Salley's then situation, and the number of things we consequently left behind, we are much better off than I had any reason to expect.⁵⁰

Additional information on his losses was recorded by Franklin, in his personal ledger:⁵¹

After the Settlement on the opposite Page [settlement of Franklin's post office accounts] the King of Great Britain made War upon us, took Philadelphia by his Armies, drove my Family out of my House, and his Officers lived in it during their Possession, plunder'd it of various Goods, and did a Variety of Damage to my Estate, for which the said King is justly chargeable viz

	Sterling
House Rent	£200. 0. 0
Collection of Books sur les Arts & Metiers, which cost me	35. 0. 0
The Holland's moeler Books. Do	5. 5. 0
the above carried off as I am inform'd by Majr Andre	
My Picture & Frame	15. 4. 0
Trunk of Books and Instruments	37. 10. 0
Three Armonica's Glasses all tun'd & Cases	55. 10. 0
Two Trunks of MS impossible to be replaced	150. 0. 0
Music (Andre)	10. 10. 0
Printing Press & Foundry Matrices	133. 10. 0
Universal Mould	
Camp Kitchen	5. 5. 0
Bathing House & Fences at Pasture destroy'd	150. 0. 0
Omitted in the Settlement	
Money I had paid Interest on the Mortgage of Post Office Land to Strettel	
£36 Pensylva Money	20. 10. 0
Sundries in Journal page 61 unsettled	187. 14. 10

⁴⁹ Sarah Bache to Benjamin Franklin, dated Goshen, February 23, 1777. Duane, *op. cit.*, 74.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 77-78. The portrait of Franklin was returned as a gift to the American nation by Earl Grey in 1906. It is now in the White House in Washington. It had been painted in London in 1759 by Benjamin Wilson. Van Doren, *op. cit.*, 760.

⁵¹ Ledger—December 10, 1764—July 8, 1775. Ms. in possession of Amer. Philos. Soc.

THE YARD

After moving to her new home, Mrs. Franklin busied herself with the surroundings of her menage. On August 1, 1765, she wrote her husband that the house "dos make a fine Squair and an equil spais on each sid [of] your house and at this time your man Gorge is aleveling of it and it looks much better than when I firste came into it which was in may. . . ." ⁵²

This levelling of the yard continued for some time, for on April 29, 1767, Mrs. Franklin wrote her husband that she was fencing the garden and that she had "two carts abringing dirt to raise it as the descent must come from the wall to go to the street. . . ." The carting was done by Robert Erwin, who also supplied the cedar posts and fences for the sum of £6. ⁵³ Apparently, there was a great deal of refuse left by the workmen. Mrs. Franklin used this refuse wisely, sending the lime to Franklin's farm and having George spread it (together with the ashes accumulated at the house) over the pasture. ⁵⁴

The removal of the debris left by the workmen and the levelling of the yard delayed the planting of the garden. This delay was bothersome to Franklin who complained to his wife on June 4, 1765, that she "should have garden'd long before the Date of [her] last, but it seems the Rubbish was not remov'd." ⁵⁵ Since the cleaning and levelling of the yard was not completed until the late summer or fall of 1765, it is apparent that no garden was possible until the spring of 1766. Perhaps a small vegetable garden was planted at that time and was then enlarged in the spring of 1767, after the yard was finally levelled and a fence was erected around the garden.

This garden, it is believed, was devoted almost exclusively to vegetables. No flowers were mentioned in the correspondence between Franklin and his wife, but on February 27, 1766, Franklin sent his wife "some curious Beans for your Garden." ⁵⁶ The annual planting of a vegetable garden apparently continued until 1786. In that year, Franklin wrote of changing the garden: "Considering our well-furnished, plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plots and gravel walks, with trees and flowering shrubs." ⁵⁷

It is apparent from the correspondence between Franklin and his wife that a brick wall was built in 1764 or '65 along the eastern and, perhaps, the southern boundaries of his property. On September 9, 1765, David Rose, brickmaker, received £10 in payment for

bricks used in the wall. ⁵⁸ The wall along the western boundary, however, was not completed at that time. On September 22, 1765, Mrs. Franklin wrote her husband that the wall was unfinished, "it lyes open on that side indead I was afraid to have it dun as we had bin a Jeckted[?] of wold it not abin a trespass. . . ." ⁵⁹ Mrs. Franklin identified the open side in a letter of October 9, 1765, to her husband,

as the dispute is not ended the wale is open nexte the livery stable [the stable of the Indian Queen Tavern on Fourth Street] and every bodey makes a free passaig throw it and will tel the wale is maid up . . . thair was a raile fense put up a cross the lott between us and our nabor Humpefris and we have a gait but it cante be keep shut tell the remainder parte of the wale is dun. . . ." ⁶⁰

Although John and Joseph Ledru, bricklayers, received on February 6, 1766, from Franklin for "work done at his Wall," ⁶¹ the wall was unfinished in July, 1766. In that month, Mrs. Franklin wrote her husband that "we air stillopen to the Stabel and a bundans of pepel is going two and frow but we air in a fair way of geting of it dun as the bricke is a holing [hauling?] to day and laste Satter day. . . ." ⁶²

Evidently, Franklin was confused in regard to the wall for on October 11, 1766, he asked his wife whether the wall "takes in Part of the late controverted Lot, and how high it comes on both sides, and whereabouts the Wall is." ⁶³ Unfortunately, Mrs. Franklin's reply to this letter has not survived, and so the question as to whether the wall was completed cannot be solved by documentary evidence.

The matter of the wall is made more confusing by the purchase of cedar posts, and the fencing of the garden mentioned in Mrs. Franklin's letter to her husband on April 29, 1767. ⁶⁴ Careful study of this evidence led the late Mr. Fred J. Gorman to the conclusion that the wall was never completed along the southern and western sides of the yard, and fence was erected along these two sides rather than a brick wall. On the other hand, Colonel Robert Carr stated clearly in his "Recollections" that the yard was "surrounded on three sides by a brick wall." ⁶⁵ As mentioned above, Colonel Carr's testimony should not be discounted completely as his memory appears to have been surprisingly clear and accurate.

⁵² Samuel Rhoads, Franklin's Receipt Book, 1764-1766. Ms. in the Hist. Soc. of Penna.

⁵³ Bache Collection (APS). Possibly the inimitable Mrs. Franklin is saying: "It lies open on that side. Indeed, I was afraid to have it done, as we had been ejected; or would it not have been a trespass?"

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* No information has been found pertaining to the cause or nature of the "dispute."

⁵⁵ Samuel Rhoads, Franklin's Receipt Book, 1764-1766.

⁵⁶ Bache Collection (APS).

⁵⁷ Franklin Papers (APS); Smyth, *op. cit.* 4: 465.

⁵⁸ Bache Collection (APS).

⁵⁹ Carr's "Recollections," 60.

⁵² Bache Collection (APS).

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Duane, *op. cit.*, 22.

⁵⁵ Franklin Papers (APS).

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ B. Franklin to Mary Hewson in Van Doren, *op. cit.*, 669-670.

A careful consideration of the available evidence offers no solution to the question. The matter may be solved by an archeological investigation of the site, but it is feared that the construction of large buildings on the site in the nineteenth century may have destroyed all evidence. It does seem probable that the wall was not completed by Mrs. Franklin. When the controversy over the boundary was settled by Franklin after his return to Philadelphia, he probably completed the brick wall around the three sides of his yard.

Some difficulty was encountered in digging a well on the property. In an undated letter, probably written late in 1765, Mrs. Franklin wrote her husband, "I shold be glad if we cold get the well duge but I am afraid it will not be dun this seson all thow I am told the awards it funished. . . ." ⁶⁶ Franklin was anxious about the well, for on June 4, 1765, he wrote his wife that he had expected the well "would have been dug in the Winter, or early in the Spring; but I hear nothing of it." ⁶⁷

Although there is no further mention of the well, it must have been dug prior to July, 1766. On July 7, 1766, Daniel Beard received £2, 10 sh. "for taking up all the Bricks in his [Franklin's] Well. Clearing several large Stones from under the Curbe, settling it deeper & finishing the same fit for use. . . ." Beard also promised to sink the well one foot deeper at his own expense in case the water should later fail. ⁶⁸ Apparently, Mrs. Franklin depended on rain water until the well was completed. The location of this well is also doubtful. The only information on its location is to be found on the plan attached to the partition deed of Franklin's estate in 1812. This plan shows a pump standing west of present day Orianna Street, approximately seventy-five feet south of Market Street. ⁶⁹

From 1765 until 1786 the entrance to Franklin's house from Market Street was by a driveway immediately to the east of a lot occupied by a Mr. Thomson, and the rear of the popular hostelry, the Indian Queen. ⁷⁰ This entrance was not to Franklin's liking, and as early as June 8, 1765, he commented in a letter to his wife on the desirability of "opening a Passage by the North

Front of our House. . . ." ⁷¹ This change in the location of the passage was not made, however, until 1786 when Franklin built three new buildings along his Market Street frontage. This improvement of the property in 1786 is mentioned below, under "Subsequent History."

No information has been found regarding the outbuildings which must have been built on the property. Outbuildings are mentioned in deeds, but this was the usual legal phraseology and cannot be considered definitive.

ADDITION TO THE HOUSE, 1786

By 1786 the growth of the Bache family had created a somewhat crowded condition in the house. Franklin decided, therefore, that it was necessary to build an addition to his house (fig. 5). In a letter of September 21, 1786, Franklin wrote to his sister, Jane Mecom, concerning this addition to the house:

I propose to have in it a long Room for my Library and Instrument, with two Bedchambers and two Garrets. The Library is to be even with the floor of my best old Chamber; and the story under it will for the present be employ'd only to hold Wood, but may be made into Rooms hereafter. This addition is on the Side next the River. I hardly know how to justify building a Library at an age that will so soon oblige me to quit it; but we are apt to forget that we are grown old, and Building is an Amusement. ⁷²

Mrs. Mecom was greatly interested in this addition, and replied that it was well that he had "plenty of ground to enlarge [his] present dwelling; it will not only be an amusement, but, in all probability, a sample of many ingenious contrivances to profit by in the future." She then continued by inquiring for more information, and stated that she imagined part of Franklin's plan "will be to have a front door, entry, and staircase to go all the way up to your lodging-rooms and garrets, besides a passage from the main house, as I suppose, through one of your best chamber closets, which will be safer in case of fire." ⁷³

On May 30, 1787, after the addition had been finished, Franklin wrote a more lengthy description of it to his sister:

To the East End of my Dwelling-House I have made an addition of 16 Feet and an half wide and 33 feet long, that is the whole Length of the old House, so that the Front and Back of the old and new Building range even, and the Row of Windows have gain'd a large Cellar for Wood, a Drawing-Room or Dining-Room on the same Level with our old Dining-Room, in which new Room we can dine a Company of 24 Persons, it being 16 feet wide and 30½ long; and it has 2 Windows at each End, the North and South, which will make it an airy Summer Room; and for Winter there is a good Chimney in the Middle, made hand-

⁶⁶ Bache Collection (APS).

⁶⁷ Franklin Papers (APS).

⁶⁸ Samuel Rhoads, Franklin's Account Book, 1764-1766.

⁶⁹ Philadelphia, Deed Book IC, 19: 21. Benjamin Franklin mentioned a pump in a letter to Samuel Rhoads, dated London, July 8, 1765. Ms. in the Hist. Soc. of Penna.

⁷⁰ The lot was owned by Francis Alison, Presbyterian clergyman and educator, who was the first vice-provost of the College of Philadelphia. He came to Philadelphia in 1752 after founding a school in Delaware in 1743 which later became Delaware College. Woody, Thomas, Francis Alison, *Dictionary of American Biography* 1: 181.

Research has failed to identify the Thomson who rented Alison's lot. He is frequently mentioned in Franklin's correspondence. It is unlikely that this Thomson was Charles Thomson, the secretary of the Continental Congress, for, according to L. R. Harley, *The life of Charles Thomson*, he lived on Spruce Street.

⁷¹ Franklin Papers (APS).

⁷² Papers of Benjamin Franklin, miscellaneous VIII, Library of Congress.

⁷³ Letter of October 12, 1786, quoted in Duane, *op. cit.*, 149-150.

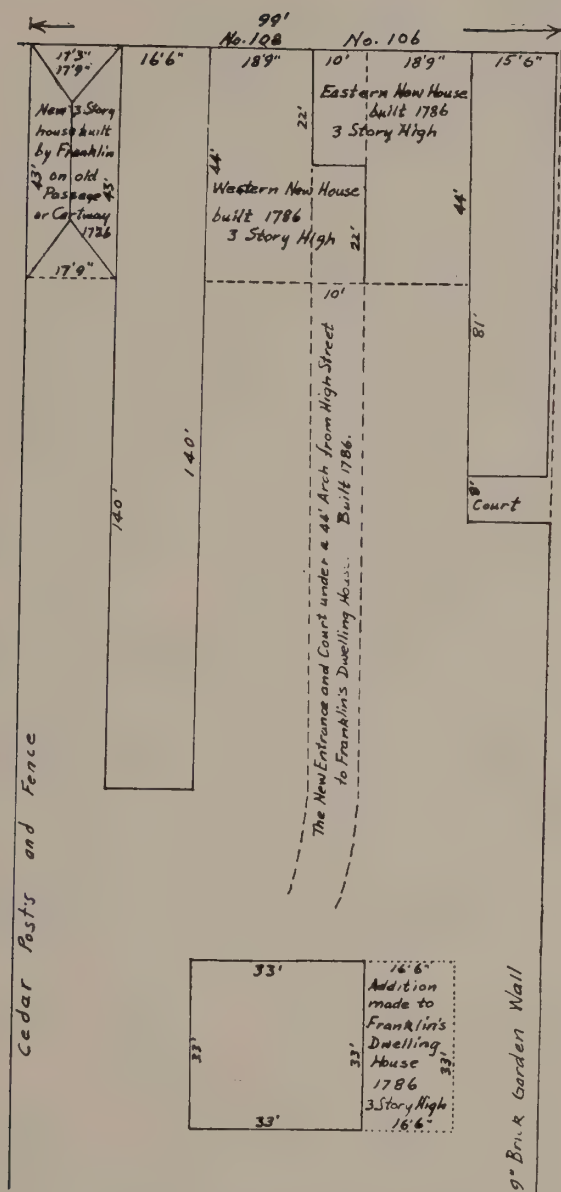


FIG. 5. Franklin Court after 1786. Courtesy of the late Fred J. Gorman.

some with marble Slabs. Over this Room is my Library, of the same Dimensions, with like Windows at each End, and lin'd with Books to the Ceiling. Over this are 2 lodging-Rooms: and over all a fine Garret. The Way into the Lower Room is out of the Entry passing by the Foot of the Stairs. Into the Library I go thro' one of the Closets of the old Drawing-Room or Bed-Chamber. And into the two new Rooms above thro' a Passage cut off from the Nursery. All these Rooms are now finished and inhabited, very much to the Convenience of the Family, who were before too much crowded.⁷⁴

After enlarging his home, Franklin improved its surroundings. In the place of the vegetable garden which had occupied much of the yard, Franklin planted grass,

⁷⁴ Smyth, *op. cit.* 9: 589.

trees, and flowering shrubs. In a letter to Mary Hewson dated May 6, 1786, he described this project: "Considering our well-furnished plentiful market, as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands into grass plots and gravel walks, with trees and flowering shrubs."⁷⁵

When the Rev. Manasseh Cutler visited Franklin in July, 1787, he recorded in his journal that the house stood "up a court-yard at some distance from the street." Cutler also mentioned that Franklin was "in his Garden, sitting upon a grass plat under a very large Mulberry.

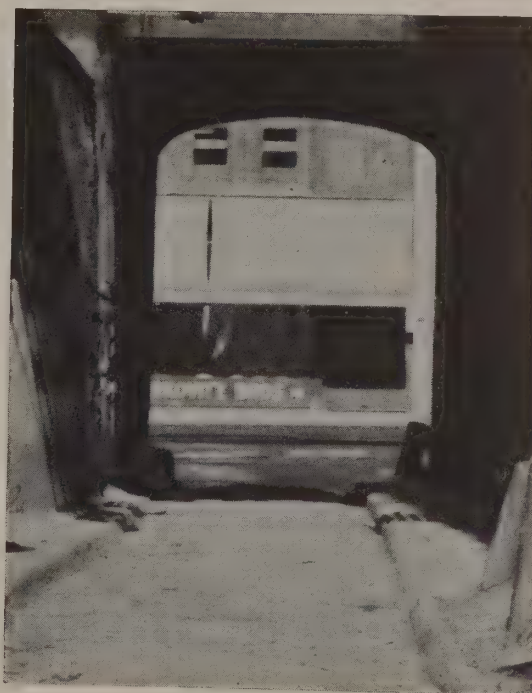


FIG. 6. Archway entrance from Franklin Court as it is today.

...⁷⁶ More detailed information regarding the garden can be found in the reminiscences of Colonel Robert Carr written in 1864.

On the South side of the house there was a grass lot, about one hundred feet square, containing a few fine plane [buttonwood] trees, and surrounded on three sides by a brick wall. . . . On the North side of the house, there was an open lot of the same size extending to the printing office. . . .⁷⁷

As a result of these alterations, both the house and the court were greatly improved. The house, which was originally thirty-four feet square, now had a front of fifty feet, the depth remaining as before.⁷⁸ In the

⁷⁵ Van Doren, *op. cit.*, 669-670.

⁷⁶ Cutler, *op. cit.* 1: 267.

⁷⁷ Carr's "Recollection," 60.

⁷⁸ The enlarged house was insured on December 6, 1790, by Richard Bache. The policy described the building as "his dwelling House in Franklin Court, situate near the Centre of the Square of High, Fourth, Chestnut & Third Streets, the said House being thirty-three feet by forty-nine feet six Inches &

large dining room on the first floor, the American Philosophical Society occasionally met when Franklin, president of the Society, was able to be present.⁷⁹ The library on the second floor was a spacious chamber. The Rev. Manasseh Cutler spent an evening in the library with Dr. Franklin in July, 1787, and recorded the following description in his journal:

It is a very large chamber, and high studded. The walls were covered with book-shelves filled with books; besides, there are four large alcoves, extending two-thirds of the length of the Chamber, filled in the same manner. I presume this is the largest, and by far the best, private library in America. He showed us a glass machine for exhibiting the circulation of the blood in the arteries and veins of the human body. The circulation is exhibited by the passing of a red fluid from a reservoir into numerous capillary tubes of glass, ramified in every direction, and then returning in similar tubes to the reservoir, which was done with great velocity, without any power to act visibly on the fluid, and had the appearance of perpetual motion. Another great curiosity was a rolling press, for taking the copies of letters or any other writing. A sheet of paper is completely copied in less than two minutes, the copy as fair as the original, and without effacing it in the smallest degree. It is an invention of his own, and extremely useful in many situations in life. He also showed us his long artificial arm and hand, for taking down and putting books up on high shelves which are out of reach; and his great armed chair, with rockers, and a large fan placed over it, with which he fans himself, keeps off flies, etc., while he sits reading, with only a small motion of his foot; and many other curiosities and inventions, all his own, but of lesser note. Over his mantel-tree, he has a prodigious number of medals, busts, and casts in wax or plaster of Paris, which are the effigies of the most noted characters in Europe.⁸⁰

The third floor of the addition provided two more bedrooms. This additional space must have been greatly needed by the large Bache family.

three stories high." Policy No. 229, Mutual Assurance Co. Unfortunately, the insurance survey of the house has been lost.

⁷⁹ Lingelbach, William E., *Old Philadelphia: redevelopment and conservation*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 93: 194, 1949.

⁸⁰ Cutler, *op. cit.* 1, 269.

SUBSEQUENT HISTORY

Franklin purchased three houses on High (Market) Street when he acquired his land. These three houses were situated on the three eastern half lots (each of sixteen and one-half foot frontage) and were purchased from Anthony Syddon, John Read, and John Croker. There is little information available on these early structures which Franklin tore down and replaced with two new ones in 1787.⁸¹ This pair was interesting because of the novel devices Franklin used to protect them from fire;⁸² as a matter of fact, the Mutual Assurance Company "in consideration of the great security made against fire"⁸³ reduced the rate from 30s to 25s per £100 value.⁸⁴ Furthermore, the houses were "three Stories high besides the Garrets, and an arch'd Passage is left in the middle between them to come through down to my Dwelling, wide enough for a carriage. . . ." ⁸⁵ To-day there is still an archway (though not the original) between the buildings that stand on Market Street at Orianna (fig. 6).

After Franklin's death in 1790, this High Street property was devised to his daughter, Sarah, and her husband, Richard Bache.⁸⁶ During the next two decades, the property passed to other descendants who had little attachment to it and even less patriotic appreciation. In subdividing the land, they planned to open a street following the line of the old entryway under the arch and continuing through the middle of the property 306 feet to the southern boundary of the land.⁸⁷ Having the effrontery to stand in the way of their proposed street, Franklin's home was perfunctorily demolished in 1812.⁸⁸

⁸¹ Smyth, *op. cit.* 9: 575-576.

⁸² Van Doren, *op. cit.*, 684.

⁸³ Minutes of the trustees of the Mutual Assurance Co., July 8, 1787 (Ms.).

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, July 11, 1787.

⁸⁵ Smyth, *op. cit.* 9: 590.

⁸⁶ Van Doren, *op. cit.*, 688-689.

⁸⁷ Riley, Edward M., *Preliminary historical report, Franklin Court . . .*, 47-49 [Phila.], [n.p.], 1950. (Mimeographed.)

⁸⁸ Duane, *op. cit.*, 23.

190, HIGH STREET
(Market Street below Sixth)

The Home of Washington and Adams
1790-1800

HAROLD DONALDSON EBERLEIN

WHEN we restore, or re-create, an historic building, it pays an enduring twofold reward. The sight of the actual physical structure gratifies the eye; its inherent and inseparable associations bring alive again the personalities that made the building noteworthy in the past.

If it be a dwelling, we become aware of a subtle intimacy linking the daily lives of its erstwhile occupants with the very fabric of their abode. The trivial incidents of existence, as well as matters of far greater import, are closely interwoven in the background and lend a colour of warm humanity to the setting. Of no dwelling can this be said more truly than of "190, High Street"—the Philadelphia home of General Washington during his Presidency [B, III].

Before his tenancy, people deemed this house one of the best in the city. It was built in the days when American exponents of Georgian domestic architecture were creating some of this country's finest examples, especially in Philadelphia and its immediate neighbourhood.¹ Soon after 1761, Mary Lawrence Masters (daughter of Thomas Lawrence and widow of William Masters) built a handsome brick dwelling on the ground recently bought from James Kinsey. There she lived with her children. This same house Mrs. Masters deeded as a wedding-gift to Mary, her elder daughter and namesake, on May 19, 1772.² Two days later, the said Mary, just past sixteen, was married at Christ Church to the Honourable Richard Penn (grandson of the Founder), the popular Lieutenant-Governor of the Province.³

Here the Penns lived and entertained in a manner becoming their means until 1775. In that year the Continental Congress deputed Richard Penn to carry to London their second petition, the Address to the Crown known as the "Olive Branch," which John Dickinson had draughted. Although Richard and Mary (Masters) Penn retained ownership of their Market Street home, they remained in England for the rest of their lives, save for a brief visit of about a year's duration, early in the nineteenth century.

Under the British tenure of the city, General Sir William Howe lived in the house. After the British evacuation, General Benedict Arnold lived there while he was Military Governour of the City. It was while occupying this house that Arnold bought Mount Pleasant (March 22, 1779) wherein, however, fate decreed he should never live. He was at West Point ere the lease of Mount Pleasant to Don Juan de Mirailles expired. It was also at this time that he married Peggy Shippen (April 15, 1779), and they were living next door to an unfriendly neighbour in the Galloway house, that peevish dyspeptic, General Joseph Reed, when the "Fort Wilson" riot broke out on October 4, 1779.⁴

Upon Arnold's departure from 190, High Street, John Holker, the French Consul, moved in and stayed there till the fire of January 2, 1780, forced him to leave; Elizabeth Drinker tells us it "consumed all but ye lower storey." Five years later—August 25, 1785, to be exact—Tench Francis, whom the Penns had constituted their attorney, conveyed the property to Robert Morris, the deed signed by Mrs. William Masters, Mary (Masters) Penn, Sarah Masters and Richard Penn.⁵

Robert Morris rebuilt the house, the brick laid in Flemish bond presumably as before, and was living in it in 1787 when Washington stayed with the Morrisises throughout the sittings of the Constitutional Convention.⁶ Washington, therefore, knew the house well before he came to occupy it for the period of his Presidency. When the City Corporation chose it as the most suitable dwelling available in the city for the President, the Morrisises moved next door to the house the Joseph Galloways had formerly owned, at the southeast corner of Sixth and Market—the house from which the Commissioners for Confiscated Estates had forcibly evicted Mrs. Galloway,⁷ Charles Willson Peale, in his republican ardour, pushing and shoving her into General Arnold's coach, which they had borrowed from next door for the occasion; the same house thereafter appropriated to the use of the President of the Supreme Ex-

¹ Mount Pleasant and Cliveden; somewhat earlier, Stenton and Hope Lodge. H. D. Eberlein and C. V. D. Hubbard, *Portrait of a colonial city*, 341, 324, 183, 158, Phila., Lippincott, 1939.

² Deed Book I-14, p. 459.

³ Charles Penrose Keith, *Provincial Councillors of Pennsylvania, 1733-1776*, 433, 453, Phila., 1883; Howard K. Jenkins, *The family of William Penn, founder of Pennsylvania, ancestry and descendants*, 193-196, Phila., 1899.

⁴ H. D. Eberlein and C. V. D. Hubbard, *Diary of Independence Hall*, 269-271, Phila., Lippincott, 1948.

⁵ Deed Book D-15, p. 117.

⁶ *Washington's Diary*, quoted in William Spohn Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 74, Phila., 1898; Eberlein and Hubbard, *Diary of Independence Hall*, 303.

⁷ Eberlein and Hubbard, *Portrait of a colonial city*, 75; *Diary of Grace Growdon Galloway, Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 55: 32-94, Jan. 1931.

ecutive Council of Pennsylvania,⁸ Joseph Reed. This property also, Robert Morris had subsequently acquired.

When Morris rebuilt the Masters-Penn house, he made significant changes both in its outward appearance and its interior arrangement. He also made substantial additions. Before the fire—if we accept the authenticity of the widely-credited C. A. Poulson sketch—the ground floor of the Market Street or north front had two windows on each side of the central doorway; evenly spaced apart, there were five windows across the fronts of each of the two upper floors; and a small triangular window lighted the attic. In other words, there was a symmetrically-ordered five-bay façade. One can readily conjecture what was the interior plan of this well-known type of Georgian dwelling.⁹

From what we know of Robert Morris's tastes and habitual inclinations, we should expect any house he built for himself to embody the most recent features devised for the elegancies of fashionable living. He was perfectly familiar with the Powel house and its stately upstairs ball-room.¹⁰ How much he knew of what was planned for William Bingham's house in Third Street, it is impossible to say. But he doubtless knew that it had become quite usual in London to put the chief rooms for entertaining above the ground floor, to enhance their dignity by means of height, and to make much of the stair leading thither. The old Italian notion of the *piano nobile* was very much alive in the latter part of the eighteenth century, even for such moderate-sized

⁸ Eberlein and Hubbard, *Portrait of a colonial city*, 75.

⁹ The most popularly-known pictures of the house at 190, High Street, all derive from the Poulson water-colour sketch, in the collection of the Library Company of Philadelphia. This sketch Poulson made in 1850, admittedly "from memory."

If Poulson was relying upon his own recollections of a house demolished 28 years previously, his memory was sadly at fault. If he was seeking, however, to depict the house Mrs. William Masters had built about 1761, he must inevitably have got his data from very old people who had some recollection of the original dwelling, for he himself had not been born when that structure burned down in 1780. If the latter was indeed his aim, in justice to him be it said that he painted the kind of handsome Georgian house that was in high favour in 1761.

As a matter of fact, the house Mrs. William Masters built was, in all likelihood, just such a structure. The *piano nobile* idea of putting the drawing-rooms above stairs had not yet made much headway in the Colonies. On the other hand, the force of precedent, in determining style, would not be lost. To point the fashion of the central door, with symmetrically-disposed window bays at each side and above, there were Hope Lodge, Stenton, Pen Rhyn, Woodford and, at greater distance, Waynesborough and Moore Hall, already standing and well known. Of more immediately present and nearby influence would be Mount Pleasant (just built), with Cliveden and Port Royal in the making.

It is most unfortunate that the Poulson picture has been so long and so widely publicised, and labelled as the house in which General Washington lived during his Presidency. For years past—and they are still doing it—books, leaflets, advertisements and what not have set forth the Poulson picture as a true representation of Washington's Philadelphia domicile from 1790 to 1797—which it most certainly is not.

¹⁰ Eberlein and Hubbard, *Portrait of a colonial city*, 371.



FIG. 1. Engraved from the C. A. Poulson water-colour sketch (in collection of Library Company of Philadelphia) made in 1850 "from memory." See note 9.

houses as that of Madame Elisabeth at Versailles. Robert Morris's conception of what was fitting was translated into tangible form.

As rebuilt, the Market Street front was of *four* bays on all three of the full floors. On the ground floor, to the left (as you face the house) or east of the doorway (towards Fifth Street) there was one window; to the west there were two. Each of the two upper floors had four windows, and the windows were taller than in the original building so that the rooms within must have had appreciably higher ceilings. A roof of steeper pitch gave a loftier attic than formerly, and two full-sized dormer windows lighted the attic front. What architectural graces the front displayed appear in the accompanying illustrations.

From the outside, one can readily picture withindoors a rectangular spacious entrance hall with a handsome winding stair ascending by several flights to the floor above. This hall would be lighted by the one window east of the doorway. From Washington's and Lear's letters, from entries in the household expense accounts, and from evidence supplied by the insurance policy surveys,¹¹ we can piece together a sufficiently trustworthy description of the interior—even to many particulars of the furnishings—as it was in the years of Presidential tenancy.

To the right on entering, immediately to the west of the entrance hall, was a large room with two windows opening on Market Street. It became Washington's family dining-room. To the rear of this room was another large room, lighted from the south. That room became the State Dining-Room and, before Washington's arrival, along with the corresponding large room

¹¹ Insurance Surveys, Nos. 891, 892, 893, Mutual Assurance Company for Insuring Houses from Loss by Fire ("Green Tree").

directly over it on the floor above, was enlarged by the extension of a bow window so that its length was thirty-four feet. To the rear of the hall and with a door opening into the State Dining-Room, was another smaller room with one window to the south and a doorway communicating with the backbuilding or ell extension. This room became the Steward's Room. It was this room, apparently, that Washington in one of his letters to Lear suggested as suitable for the "upper servants." The plan of the upper floors was presumably much the same as that of the ground floor. The room above the family dining-room became the "small" drawing-room, and the large bow-windowed room directly above the State Dining-Room became the State Drawing-Room. (The arrangement of the façade's penetrations, together with the disposition of the rooms, may perhaps have led Washington to allude to his prospective domicile as a "single house," as distinguished from the usual large residence with a central doorway, central hall, and the



FIG. 2. 190, High Street. From J. F. Watson, *Annals of Philadelphia*, Phila., 1879-81. From the early nineteenth-century Mumford engraving.

customary rooms at each side. Again, by "single" he may have meant "detached," a term currently used in England.)

Before the alterations and additions preparatory to the President's occupancy, the backbuilding upstairs contained, besides bedrooms, a small "bathing room," at the far end of the kitchen ell.¹² This Washington had converted into a private study and dressing-room for himself. After the enlargement, the backbuilding included a generous-sized kitchen, fifty-two by eighteen feet, a servants' hall for the numerous retinue attached to the President's household, fifteen by fifty-one feet, and a commodious wash house. These dimensions are confirmed by the insurance policy surveys still preserved by the Mutual Assurance Company for Insuring Houses

¹² In many old Philadelphia houses a small room, often at the end of the ell extension, was set apart as a "bathing room," even before the introduction of bathtubs. Afterwards, when a bathtub was installed, it was generally placed in this room.



FIG. 3. From a crayon drawing now at Strawberry Mansion. On the board backing of the picture is scrawled in lead pencil the legend "Drawn from a print by H. D. McIntire about 1930. Original drawing by Birch." So far, no drawing of this house by either William or Thomas Birch has come to light. This drawing was obviously taken from the early 19th-century water-colour by W. L. Breton now in the collection of the Hist. Soc. Penna.

from Loss by Fire, commonly known as the "Green Tree."¹³

From his previous acquaintance with the house, and from his recent experience with Presidential housekeeping, Washington knew from the first that there would have to be changes and additions to render "190, High Street" in any way adequate to the needs of his numerous household and for the public functions incumbent upon him as the nation's Chief Executive.

On quitting New York City for Mount Vernon, in 1790, General Washington and his family spent four days in Philadelphia, at the City Tavern—Thursday, September 2, till Monday, September 6. It was inevitable, however brief his stay, that the President should be the object of much public entertaining. When he reached the city about two o'clock on Thursday, attended by a military escort and a throng of private citizens who had gone out to meet him on his way, artillery salutes and a clangour of bell-ringing welcomed him.¹⁴ At four o'clock, the City Corporation, along with members of the State Legislature, dined him at the City Tavern and prolonged the occasion with thirteen toasts and appropriate speeches; in the evening, there were fireworks. The next day, he was guest of honour again, at a dinner given by members of the Convention for Revising the Constitution of Pennsylvania, who had just finished their labours.

On Saturday, "a number of respectable private citizens" gave "this illustrious personage, his amiable consort and family"

an elegant Fête Champêtre . . . on the banks of the Schuylkill, in the highly improved grounds of the Messrs. Gray.¹⁵

¹³ Insurance Surveys, Nos. 891, 892, 893, Mutual Assurance Company for Insuring Houses from Loss by Fire.

¹⁴ *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 4, 1790.

¹⁵ At the instance of Samuel Vaughan, the Grays laid out their

. . . The company, amounting to over two hundred, ladies and gentlemen, assembled at two o'clock, and at three sat down to a sumptuous and cold collation in which (though only 24 hours were given for the preparations) all viands and fruits of the season were assembled and elegantly arranged. A band of music played during the repast, and at the close, several excellent songs were sung and the following toasts were drank.

[Here follow the toasts]

The President and the ladies then withdrew; when the following toast was drank with loud plaudits,

"The ILLUSTRIOUS TRAVELLERS."

The gentlemen, after hearing two or three Bacchanalian songs and toasting some of their absent friends, rose from the table, and joined the ladies in the garden; when a concert of vocal and instrumental music was performed with considerable applause; afterwards the company partook of tea, coffee, and other refreshments, and then walked to the mill scene; which, together with the gardens, and the ship in the river [the ship "Union," made for the Grand Constitutional Parade in 1788], were on this occasion illuminated with uncommon elegance.

The company retired about 9 o'clock. The weather was exceedingly favourable, and the utmost hilarity [*sic*] and good order reigned during the whole entertainment, and the amiable Travellers seemed to partake of the general satisfaction.¹⁶

Boiled down from all their highfalutin language and long-tailed adjectives, the newspaper accounts make it quite plain that Philadelphia officialdom and "respectable private citizens," however well-meant their efforts to be agreeable, imposed an onerous and wearisome schedule on the President. Nevertheless, in spite of the many hours he had to give up to being publicly fêted and lionised, he found time enough during this four-day visit to make a thorough inspection of the premises he was to live in, to plan what would have to be done to make the place sufficient for the manifold requirements of the Presidential establishment, and to discuss matters fully with the Morrisises.

Tobias Lear, the President's private secretary, had stayed behind in New York City to see to the moving to Philadelphia. To him Washington wrote on Sunday, September 5, that Mrs. Washington had been indisposed since reaching Philadelphia but, if she were well enough, they would continue on their way to Mount Vernon on Monday.¹⁷ Then, in the same letter, he said of the house:

It is, I believe, the best *Single house* in the City; yet without additions, it is inadequate to the commodious accommodations of my family. These, I believe will be made.

The first floor contains only two public Rooms (except one for the *upper Servants*). The second floor will have

Gardens close on the heels of Peace and appointed them for the enticement of Philadelphians. In his *Journal*, Dr. Manasseh Cutler gives a detailed description of Grays' Gardens after a visit on July 14, 1787. 1: 274, *et seq.*

¹⁶ *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 8, 1790.

¹⁷ *Letters and recollections of George Washington, Being letters to Tobias Lear and others between 1790-1799*, ed. by Jared Sparks, 3-6, N. Y., Doubleday, 1906; contains an invaluable collection of Washington's letters to Tobias Lear during the period of removal to Philadelphia.

two public (drawing) Rooms & with the aid of one Room with the partition of it, in the back building will be sufficient for the accommodation of Mrs. Washington & the children & their maids—besides affording me a small place for a private study and dressing room. The third storey will furnish you and Mrs. Lear with a good lodging Room,—a public office (for there is no place below for one) and two rooms for the Gentlemen of the family. The Garret has four good Rooms which must serve Mr. and Mrs. Hyde (unless they should prefer the Room over the Wash house), William—and such servants as it may not be better to place in the addition (as proposed) to the back building. There is a room over the Stable (without a fireplace, but by means of a Stove) may serve the Coachman & Postillions; and there is a smoke house, which possibly may be more useful to me for the accommodation of Servants, than for smoking of meat. The intention of the addition to the back Building is to provide a Servants' Hall, and one or two (as it will afford) lodging Rooms for the Servants, especially those who are coupled. There is a very good Wash house adjoining the Kitchen (under one of the Rooms already mentioned). There are good Stables, but for 12 horses only, and a Coach house which will hold all my Carriages. . . . P.S.

In a fortnight or 20 days from this time, it is expected Mr. Morris will have removed out of the house. It is proposed to add bow windows to the two public Rooms in the South front of the house, but as all the other apartments will be close and secure the sooner after that time you can be in the house, with the furniture, the better, that you may be well fixed and see how matters go on during my absence.¹⁸

With the moving very much on his mind, and further matters occurring to him on his way towards Mount Vernon, he writes Tobias Lear again from Baltimore on the ninth of September:

. . . In order that you may not be too fast or too slow in your removal to Philadelphia, it might be well to open a correspondence with Mr. Morris, requesting him to inform you at what time the house will be ready to receive the furniture, because it is proposed as I was informed after writing you on Sunday last, to have the Rooms painted after Mr. Morris should have left it. I would not let the bow windows, or any other addition to the house, or any of the out buildings be any impediment to your removal, for you will have sufficient Room to stow the furniture (intended for the two large Rooms) in some other parts of the house.

. . . But with respect to Mrs. Lewis and her daughter, I wish it may not be done [Mrs. Lewis and her daughter had been the washer women in New York and Washington had left it to Lear to decide whether to bring them along with some of the other servants] . . . because the dirty figures of Mrs. Lewis and her daughter will not be a pleasant sight in view (as the Kitchen always will be) of the principal entertaining rooms in our new habitation.

Mr. and Mrs. Morris have insisted upon leaving the two large looking Glasses which are in their best Rooms, because they have no place (they say) proper to remove them to, and because they are unwilling to hazzard the taking of them down. You will therefore let them have, in place of them, the choice of mine. The large ones I purchased from the French Minister they do not incline to take; but will be glad of some of the others. They also will leave a large Glass lamp in the entry or Hall, and will take one or more of my Glass lamps in lieu of it. In disposing of the Yards

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

Mr. Morris will take in (to the House he removes to) the part which formerly belonged to it. I mention this that you may not be surprised at the attempt. . . .¹⁹

Tobias Lear's letters to Washington, written from New York City during this period, enlarge the intimate domestic scene and picture the other end of the moving process. The letters of September 12 and 17 are mainly about arrangements for shipping the household goods by packet boat, and about the servants—their several qualifications for the new environment, and which of them will continue in the service of the President's family, and which will not.

Solicitous about the moving and the safety of breakables, Washington wrote Lear from Mount Vernon on September 17:

. . . The motive for writing to you at this time is, that upon unpacking the china ornaments²⁰ which accompanied the mirrors for the Tables [since all the china table ornaments were not needed in Philadelphia, Lear had already shipped some of them to Mount Vernon], it was found (notwithstanding they were in Bran) that many of the delicate and tender parts were broken; occasioned, I believe, by the Bran not being put in and settled down by a little at a time. To press the Bran around the Images (you have to remove with the platteaux) will not answer; still it must be so compact as to prevent friction in moving; and this can only be done by putting each Image or figure in a separate box with Bran, by little and little, shaking and settling it by degrees as it is added.

By a letter which Major Jackson has received from General Steward, he has completed his removal, & Mr. Morris had begun to take things out of the house I am to have, to make room for my furniture, but as Mr. Morris was desired, so I am persuaded he will inform you when it will be safe and proper for you to remove. The sooner I think it can be done the better; as you will be able to make such arrangements, and provide such conveniences as you will know we shall want, and which (I suppose) through the channels they are now making, may be accomplished.

. . . at any rate, there will be no occasion for Mrs. Lewis or her daughter [Evidently incorrigible slatterns!]. . . .²¹

Again, three days later, on receiving a reassuring letter from Lear, the President writes from Mount Vernon:

. . . I am glad to hear that the furniture of the large drawing Room, especially the Glasses, are packed in a manner which you think secure. With respect to the Table ornaments, my opinion has been so fully given on the mode of putting them up, that I shall say nothing further on the subject in this letter, and as I presume a correspondence has been opened between Mr. Morris and you, I have no doubt of your embracing the proper moment for their removal, & the best mode of accomplishing it.²²

The china "Table ornaments" or "Images," porcelain figures of various sizes, used to decorate the dining-

table, gave Washington much concern for their safety. One entry in the household expense accounts notes the payment of £43. 0. 0. for such decorative elegancies. Again, "Table Ornaments from France" cost £20. 4. 9. In all likelihood some, at least, of these choice *objets d'art* were among the many purchases Gouverneur Morris made in Paris for the President. There were several other table ornaments, it is said, fashioned from cast iron gilded.²³

From the end of August, when he left New York City for Mount Vernon, until he reached Philadelphia at the end of November, Washington wrote on the average of two letters a week to Lear. Lear, in turn, wrote equally often and kept Washington fully acquainted with every possible detail. The President's dither about the packing and moving appears again in his letter of September 27 but, he continues,

I am glad to find that the house according to Mr. Morris's notification to you will be ready about the time you had made arrangements for the removal of my furniture, the mode of doing which, is, I am persuaded, the cheapest and best. How have you disposed (for safety) of the Pagoda? It is a delicate piece of stuff and will require to be tenderly handled.

.
As the Lustre [the crystal chandelier he had bought in New York from the French Minister] is paid for & securely packed up and may suit the largest drawing Room at Mr. Morris's, I do not incline to part with it [an offer had been made in New York to buy it]; the Franklin Stoves and other fixtures, if they cannot be disposed of without loss, must be brought round with the other furniture; we may find use for them. Such things as are freighted in the common way (if the vessel you desired Colo. Biddle to procure is unable to carry the whole) had better be of the kinds which require least care.

.
Mrs. Morris has a mangle (I think they are called) for Ironing of Clothes, which, as it is fixed in the place where it is commonly used, she proposed to leave and take mine. To this I have no objection provided mine is equally good and convenient; but if I should obtain any advantage, besides that of its being up, and ready for use, I am not inclined to receive it.²⁴

The "Pagoda"²⁵ (so dubbed by Washington) was a large porcelain centrepiece for the table, made in sections, and seems to have been imported from Paris. It must have been a truly overwhelming object of dinner-table embellishment. Lear said it arrived from abroad

²³ Stephen Decatur, Jr., *Private affairs of George Washington; from the records and accounts of Tobias Lear, Esquire, his Secretary*, 40, 115, 134, Boston, Houghton, 1933; presents a great quantity of authentic material from a collection of Lear's account books, letters, and other papers given by Lear's widow (a niece of Mrs. Washington) to his nephew, Rear Admiral George Washington Storer, the great-grandfather of Stephen Decatur, Jr. The chest containing these papers was forgotten and unopened for nearly eighty years. Upon examination the contents revealed much fresh and intimate biographical material for Washington during his Presidency.

²⁴ *Letters and recollections of George Washington*, 13, 14.

²⁵ *Private affairs of George Washington*, 134.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 6, 7.

²⁰ These figures or "Images" were fragile, dainty conceits in porcelain. One of them, for instance, represented a bird perching on the branch of a tree—the kind of thing susceptible of breakage, even with the most careful packing.

²¹ *Letters and recollections of George Washington*, 8, 9.

²² *Ibid.*, 12.

packed in cotton, and in cotton he packed it again when he shipped it to Philadelphia. He placed it in the small drawing-room, and that disposition of it Washington approved. Mrs. Morris's mangle turned out to be better than Washington's, so the President refused to make the proposed exchange.

The President was vastly relieved when Lear at last got to Philadelphia, and wrote him on October 27 to congratulate him on his safe arrival and the fact that all the household goods had been received undamaged. In the course of the letter he said,

I have no particular directions to give respecting the appropriation of the furniture. By means of the Bow windows, the back rooms will become the largest, and of course will receive the furniture of the largest dining and drawing Rooms, and in that case, although there is no closet within the former, there are some in the Steward's room directly opposite [the room immediately back of the hall], which are not inconvenient.

These, he suggests, might

be appropriated for the Images, save [Sèvres] china and other things of the sort, which are not in common use.

Then he adds,

Mrs. Morris, who is a notable lady in family arrangements, can give you much information in all the conveniences about the house and buildings; and I dare say would rather consider it as a Compliment to be consulted in these matters (as she is so near) than a trouble to give her opinion of them, or in putting up any of the fixtures, as the house is theirs, and will revert to them, with the advantages or disadvantages which will result from the present establishment of things. I am very glad you pressed them not to incommode themselves by an inconvenient remove.²⁶

As the time drew near for him to start for Philadelphia, the President grew increasingly uneasy about the delays in finishing the work in and around the house. From Mount Vernon he wrote Lear on October 31:

. . . I am pained . . . to find there is a doubt that the house will not be completely finished and ready for our reception towards the latter end of next month. At all times this would be attended with inconvenience, but at *that* season and while Congress *are in session*, it would be exceedingly so.²⁷

Again, in a letter of November 7, after giving directions about the wine coolers and other silverware Gouverneur Morris had sent from France, he wrote:

I hope my Study (that is to be)²⁸ will be in readiness against I arrive. And if the rubbish and other litter oc-

casioned by the People of Mortar and the Carpenters is at a stand,—I wish that every thing of the sort may be removed, and the yard made and kept as clean as the Parlour. That was always the case in Mr. Morris's time, and has become more essential now as the *best* Rooms are *now* back, and an *uninterrupted* view from them into the yard and kitchen which is nearly upon a level with the dining Room.

When Tobias Lear had reached Philadelphia early in October, he had found a discouraging state of affairs. Mrs. Morris had been ill and this mischance had delayed the Morrises in moving into their new quarters, and thus in making room for the Washingtons' furniture. Worse still, though some of the painting had been done, the carpenters and masons had done *nothing*, except lay the bow-window foundation. On the sixteenth Mrs. Morris was well enough to move, the Morrises' remaining possessions were transferred next door and, on the seventeenth, Lear could report to Mount Vernon that the masons would start building the bow-window next day. After finishing that, they would "run up the Servants' hall on the back part of the Kitchen, and extend it far enough to make two rooms for the Servants at the end of the Hall."²⁹ But Lear feared there would be six weeks' delay to look forward to, before the work could be completed, although Mr. Morris was optimistic and said *two*.

A week later he wrote that he was confirmed in his "opinion in last letter—work cannot be finished sooner than 1st of December, and even that period will not complete it unless they make more despatch."³⁰ The workmen had not yet pulled down the wall for the bow-window addition. Not until three days later did the masons begin to build the bow and get it up a little above the foundation. On October 28 "the foundation of the Servants' hall is not yet laid. The Stable & Smoke House are untouched."³¹ Only then were the men removing the piles of rubbish from the yards so that the thirty-seven cords of wood Colonel Biddle had ordered could be piled—all of which should have been done long before.

When Lear protested vigorously and tried to speed up the lagging work, he got *explanations*—which mended matters not at all. To be told that scarcity of artisans—the exceptional amount of building, alteration, and repair going on elsewhere in the city—the difficulty of keeping men on the job when other employers kept tempting them away by offers of higher wages, were to blame—these excuses did not allay either Washington's

anxiety), he expressly reserved to himself ownership of two "large looking glasses, the stove now standing in the hall, *the marble and wooden baths, copper boiler, apparatus of the baths, etc.*" [Italics ours.] Morris's bathtubs were certainly among the first (if not, indeed, the *first*) bathtubs installed in a Philadelphia house. For early bathing arrangements v. "When Society First Took a Bath," *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 67: 30–48, 1943.

²⁹ Letter of Tobias Lear to Washington, Oct. 17, 1790. MS. Division, Library of Congress.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1790.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1790.

²⁶ *Letters and recollections of George Washington*, 19.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 26. The conversion of the former "bathing-room" into his small private study did not leave the President's family wholly dependent for their ablutions upon bedroom pitchers and washbowls—or even upon round Nanking china "bath tubs" on mahogany stands. The insurance policy surveys show that one of the dependent outbuildings was a "Bath House," 21 feet by 15 feet, and two storeys high; and we have documentary proof that when Robert Morris sold the property to Andrew Kennedy, in 1795 (subject, of course, to Washington's continued ten-

or Lear's irritation and anxiety. When at last the sections of wall came down for the bow-window addition, there was another time-consuming task of shoring up the joists while their new masonry support rose to its full height. Then, on November 14, it developed that the entire ceilings of the two enlarged rooms would have to be replastered to avoid unsightly joints. Further, it was discovered that a new drain must be constructed in the cellar—which kept that region in a turmoil and prevented Lear from laying in the supply of cyder, apples, and other bulky provisions he had planned.³²

With all this combination of harrowing setbacks and daily exasperations trying his patience to the limit Lear, nevertheless, managed to make the necessary enquiries and arrangements for young George Washington Parke Custis to enter school; engage tuition at the College and bespeak lodgings for the President's two nephews, George Steptoe and Lawrence Augustine Washington (his brother Samuel's sons); find out what tradesmen it would be advisable to deal with for household supplies; and dispose the furniture in such parts of the house as were not cluttered up with workmen's tools and materials. In the front lower room, which would be the family dining-room, he placed the family dining-room "blue furniture" and noted in one of his reports:

There are three window curtains belonging to the blue furniture, which will serve for the dining-room [it had two windows], and the window in the Hall on the left hand as you enter the front door.³³

Nor, amidst the confusion, did he neglect to visit the coachmaker, as Washington had desired, to inspect the painting and give directions about the heraldic blazoning. Neither did he fail to order new caps for the postillions for, almost on the eve of setting out from Mount Vernon, the President had written:

Upon examining the Caps of Giles and Paris [the postillions] I find they (especially Paris's) are much worn, and will be unfit to appear in with decency, after the journey from hence is performed. I therefore request that you have two handsome ones made, with fuller and richer tassels at top than the old ones. That the maker of them may have some government in the size the enclosed dimentions of their heads, will I presume be sufficient.³⁴

Lear thought of everything. His patience under the repeated vexations of this period, his good judgement, his ready grasp of Washington's wishes and his fidelity in carrying them out, speak volumes for his good temper and his efficiency.

With all the ado of preparation and Lear's untiring efforts, the work was not fully finished when the President and his family arrived at the end of November. They had to get rid of the workmen by moving in on top of them. (This has a familiar modern ring to it!) Only by dint of unceasing urgency did things get

straightened out enough for the President to hold his first levee on December 7.

The story of the moving; the President's part in planning the alterations and additions to the house; his instructions for the arrangement of the furnishings—in every feature of equipment, indeed, even to the colour of new curtains; his specific directions about each of the servants and their respective duties; and his care about choosing proper tradesmen to deal with—all these show facets of Washington's many-sided personality too often ignored or wholly unknown. That he had a tremendous capacity for detail and liked to arrange everything himself becomes quite clear from his correspondence of these months with Lear. And at the very time when he was giving all these domestic minutiae due oversight, we should remember that a variety of other urgent matters also claimed his close attention—the management of his extensive farms in Virginia; the planning and development of the future Federal City; the establishment of a stable financial system for the country; Indian troubles on the frontiers; the adjustment of post-war relations with England, especially in respect of the Northwest Posts; and, most harassing of all, the host of annoyances and anxieties let loose by the French Revolution.

Besides the President and Mrs. Washington, their household included Nelly and George Washington Parke Custis, Mrs. Washington's grandchildren whom the President had adopted at the death of their father, "Jackie" Custis; Tobias Lear and Mrs. Lear; the "Gentlemen of the Family," as the President's secretaries were called—Major Jackson, Robert Lewis, the President's nephew, and Bartholomew Dandridge, Mrs. Washington's nephew; and about twenty domestics, both white and black.

With this number of servants, changes from time to time were, of course, inevitable. On a general average, however, there were fifteen white and five black, the latter brought up from Mount Vernon. When the household was established in Philadelphia, Mr. Hyde (already mentioned) was the Steward, while Mrs. Hyde performed various supervisory functions, baked cakes, and made the desserts for the State Dinners.

Samuel Fraunces soon succeeded Mr. Hyde as Steward. He had been the boniface of the noted Fraunces's Tavern in New York City and had long been devotedly attached to General Washington. Although not a negro, he was generally known as "Black Sam" because of his exceeding swarthy complexion. When Mrs. Hyde departed with her husband, Hercules (Uncle Harkless) was fetched from Mount Vernon, a veritable "character" quite as much as "Black Sam." Hercules was an admirable cook quite capable of filling Mrs. Hyde's place in baking cakes and making elaborate confections. He was an irrepressible dandy and every evening would sally forth arrayed in what he deemed the

³² *Ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1790.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1790.

³⁴ *Letters and recollections of George Washington*, 30.

height of fashion—cocked hat, blue coat, silver knee and shoe buckles, gold-headed walking-stick—and stroll through the streets, “an object of admiration (and envy) for all the others of his race.”³⁵

When the Washingtons came to live in Philadelphia, George Washington Parke Custis was only a small boy. At his impressionable age, domestic scenes stamped themselves indelibly in his memory and, years afterwards, he recalled how Uncle Harkless shone in all his glory while preparing the Thursday or Congress dinner;

during his labours upon this banquet he required some half-dozen aprons, and napkins out of number. It was surprising the order and discipline that was observed in so bustling a scene. His underlings flew in all directions to execute his orders, while he, the great master-spirit, seemed to possess the power of ubiquity, and to be everywhere at the same moment.³⁶

When the Steward served the dinner, on the stroke of four, the “labours of Hercules” ceased. It was then that Uncle Harkless toggged himself up in all his finery and started for his promenade.

Washington insisted that everyone in his household should do his or her full duty, from the “Gentlemen of the Family,” his secretaries, down to the stable boys. But, if exacting up to a reasonable limit, he was also considerate. Time and again, the household expense accounts show entries of tickets bought for the servants to go to the circus or to some other amusement. The discipline of his house was well-ordered rather than severe. The orderly and willing service, which he knew how to get, was essential to the smooth running of an establishment where there were so many public functions held. The machinery of entertaining on a large scale has its vital parts in the servants’ quarters. No one knew this better than Washington.

The regularly recurring public functions at the President’s house were the President’s levees on Tuesday afternoons at three o’clock (which lasted till four), the State Dinners on Thursdays at four o’clock, and Mrs. Washington’s Drawing-Rooms on Friday evenings. Besides these, there were the New Year’s Day receptions when private citizens as well as public personages called to make their compliments, the Fourth of July, and the Birth Days, when many visitors called to offer felicitations.

The levees were intended for men and were held in the State Dining-Room; all seats were removed. The President stood in front of the fireplace,

clad in black velvet; his hair in full dress, powdered and gathered behind in a large silk bag; yellow gloves on his hands; holding a cocked hat with a cockade in it, and the edges adorned with a black feather about an inch deep. He wore knee and shoe buckles; and a long sword, with a finely

³⁵ *Recollections and private memoirs of Washington*, by his Adopted Son, George Washington Parke Custis, 423, 424, N. Y., 1860.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 423.

wrought and polished steel hilt, which appeared at the left hip; the coat worn over the sword, so that the hilt, and the part below the coat behind, were in full view. The scabbard was white polished leather.

A secretary, or “some gentleman whom he knew himself,” presented the visitor to him,

and he required to have the name so distinctly pronounced that he could hear it. He had the very uncommon faculty of associating a man’s name, and personal appearance, so durably in his memory, as to be able to call one by name, who made him a second visit. He received his visitor with a dignified bow, while his hands were so disposed of as to indicate that the salutation was not to be accompanied with shaking hands. This ceremony never occurred in these visits, even with his most near friends, that no distinction might be made.

As visitors came in, they formed a circle around the room. At a quarter past three, the door was closed, and the circle was formed for that day. He then began on the right, and spoke to each visitor, calling him by name, and exchanging a few words with him. When he had completed his circuit, he resumed his first position, and the visitors approached him in succession, bowed and retired. By four o’clock this ceremony was over.³⁷

The levees were always distinctly formal occasions but were not invariably as frigid and rigid as one might imagine from the foregoing description. Instances are recorded when there was certainly greater freedom of general conversation and far less oppressive restraint. Mr. Hammond, the British Minister, contributed a bright note by wearing diplomatic full dress whenever he attended.

It was quite customary for foreign diplomats to be presented at these levees and at the first levee held in Philadelphia, December 7, 1790,

Ignatius Palyrat, Esq; as Consul-General from her most faithful Majesty the Queen of Portugal to the United States of America, was presented by the Hon. Thomas Jefferson, Secretary of State, and most graciously received.³⁸

as the *Pennsylvania Packet* of the following day informs us.

By way of contrast, far more cheerful and enlivening were Mrs. Washington’s Friday evening Drawing-Rooms, held in the State Drawing-Room and the smaller front drawing-room upstairs. Mrs. Washington was always gracious and kindly and the atmosphere was not charged with formality. The President did not then consider *himself* as visited, came as a private gentleman, minus hat and sword, and talked freely with those about him. Also, there were appropriate refreshments. Mrs. John Adams wrote to her daughter:

On Friday evening last, I went with Charles to the drawing-room, being the first of my appearance in public. The room became full before I left it, and the circle very brilliant. How could it be otherwise, when the dazzling Mrs. Bingham and her beautiful sisters [the Misses Willing] were

³⁷ William Sullivan, *Public men of the Revolution*, 120 (quoted in W. S. Baker., *Washington after the Revolution*, 201).

³⁸ *Pennsylvania Packet*, Dec. 8, 1790.

there; the Misses Allen, and Misses Chew; in short a constellation of beauties?³⁹

After attending this same drawing-room, Miss Sally McKean, daughter of Chief-Justice McKean of Pennsylvania, wrote to a New York friend:

You could never have had such a drawing-room; it was brilliant beyond anything you could imagine; and though there was a good deal of extravagance, there was so much of Philadelphia taste in every thing that it must be confessed the most delightful occasion of the kind ever known in this country.⁴⁰

Inasmuch as the drawing-rooms were deemed purely social functions and were not invested with protocol rigidities, the only requirement for attendance was that everyone should wear full dress. Mrs. Washington wore very little jewellery, in marked contrast to many of the ladies who came to her drawing-rooms, especially the wives of the French and Austrian Ministers "who frequently appeared blazing with diamonds," the latter noted for her extravagance in this particular. This may have been some of the "extravagance" Sally McKean alluded to. The city at that time was full of foreign visitors, many of them French refugees, who all expressed astonishment at the elegance displayed in the costumes of the Philadelphia ladies, "clad," as one of them said, "to the tip of the French fashions, of which they were remarkably fond."

Mrs. Washington sat with one or two intimate friends and "usually remained seated while receiving her guests." At her right, when present, always sat Mrs. Robert Morris, often dubbed "second lady of the so-called Republican Court."

As the guests arrived, they went at once and made their bow to Mrs. Washington, chatted for a moment, and then moved off to follow their own devices and talk to whom they would, while the President and his secretaries mingled with the company, seeing to it that no one was neglected. The President talked almost exclusively to the ladies; it was about the only chance he had.⁴¹

At the drawing-rooms there was none of the prevalent gambling, nor even card-playing without stakes. Refreshments in the room adjoining that in which Mrs. Washington received—tea, coffee, cakes, sweetmeats; in hot weather sometimes orange-ade or some cold drink of that sort—afforded a focus of sociability and conversation.

It was known that both the President and Mrs. Washington liked to go early to bed—he rose at four or thereabouts, and Mrs. Washington not much later—and, although the drawing-rooms were major social events, they began early (around seven) and broke up about ten o'clock. In New York City, indeed, nine-thirty had

been the usual time, but the later hour seems to have been a concession to the social usages that obtained in Philadelphia during the Presidency. The guests, on leaving, went again and paid Mrs. Washington their respects. Then, as each lady was ready, one of the secretaries would hand her to her carriage.⁴²

Although there was a minimum of formality and a complete absence of ostentation, just as one would expect at any like function in polite society to-day, the vitriolic anti-Federalist newspapers denounced the drawing-rooms as "court-like levees" and "queenly drawing-rooms." This hurt Washington, who was exceeding sensitive. But the President considered levees and drawing-rooms not only proper but essential, and they went right on in spite of opposition carplings and snarlings. He may have become more reserved than formerly, but he never failed in his courteous efforts to put visitors at their ease.⁴³

Mrs. Washington held her last drawing-room on March 3, 1797, the eve of President Adams's inauguration. James Iredell wrote to Mrs. Iredell:

This evening is Mrs. Washington's last drawing-room, and a very crowded one it will be, though extremely exciting to a person of any sensibility.⁴⁴

The diplomatic and Congressional dinners in the State Dining-Room with its crimson curtains began almost on the stroke of four o'clock. The President, a most punctual person, would wait five minutes (allowing that much for possible variations in time-pieces) and then, if an expected guest had not arrived, the company sat down. When late-comers appeared, the President would say, "Gentlemen (or Sir), we are too punctual for you. I have a cook who never asks whether the company has come, but whether the hour has come." The guests at these dinners included high government officials, members of Congress, dignitaries of State and City, and sometimes distinguished visitors in the city. The President tried to invite all members of Congress in turn, and tried also to have members at the same time from different parts of the country so that the dinner might not seem a sectional affair. This often threw together guests who were practically strangers to each other, or who had little in common. As might be expected, it scarcely conduced to lively or stimulating conversation and explains why many thought the State Dinners dull.

When Mrs. Washington was present at these dinners, she sat at the head of the table; Tobias Lear, or one of the other secretaries, sat at the foot. The President placed himself mid-way the length of the table, but so that Mrs. Washington, however distant, might be on his right hand. If other ladies were present, they sat at each side of Mrs. Washington while she moved to a seat directly opposite the President, and one of the secre-

³⁹ Letter of Mrs. John Adams, in Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 203.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 203.

⁴¹ Decatur, *Private Affairs of George Washington*, 44.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 343.

taries took her place at the end of the table. Unless a clergyman were present, Washington said grace before sitting down. If a clergyman were at the table, Washington desired him both to ask a blessing before dinner and return thanks afterward.⁴⁵

Down the centre of the dining-table was a plateau or "fender," about ten feet long by two wide, consisting of sections of mirror surrounded by a fretted silver or plated "gallery" or railing rising an inch or more above the glass surface. The end sections were shaped to correspond with the rounded table-ends. Along the length of the plateau stood the porcelain figures already described. Outside the plateau were placed the various dishes, "always without covers," and outside the dishes were the plates of the guests.⁴⁶

Madeira was the wine most generally used in the President's family but, at the Thursday State Dinners, at least one other was served and sometimes as many as four different kinds appeared. The President, habitually abstemious himself both in food and drink, did not usually sit long over his wine at the end of the State Dinners and often withdrew soon after the ladies, leaving his secretaries to do the remaining honours of the board.⁴⁷

Washington was notoriously deficient in "small talk," a limitation of which he was quite aware. Between this want of conversational "small change," his natural reserve in the presence of strangers or of people he knew but slightly, and the self-consciousness or even awe so many are said to have felt in his presence, one can understand how a State Dinner might become a grim ordeal of silence. That dour Scot, William Maclay, U. S. Senator from Pennsylvania, describes one of the Presidential dinners in his *Journal*. (The particular dinner he described was in New York, but his description might answer equally well for some of the subsequent dinners in the Market Street house.) He says:

It was the most solemn dinner ever I sat at. Not a health drank; scarce a word said until the cloth was taken away. Then the President, filling a glass of wine, with great formality drank to the health of every individual by name round the table. Everybody imitated him, charged glasses, and such a buzz of "health, sir," and "health, madam," and "thank-you, sir," and "thank-you, madam," never had I heard before. Indeed, I had liked to have been thrown out in the hurry; but I got a little wine in my glass, and passed the ceremony. The ladies sat a good while, and the bottles passed about; but there was a dead silence almost. Mrs. Washington at last withdrew with the ladies.

I expected the men would now begin, but the same stillness remained. The President . . . now and then said a sentence or two on some common subject, and what he said was not amiss. . . . We did not sit long after the ladies retired. The President rose, went upstairs to drink coffee; the company followed. I took my hat and came home.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 51; Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 339.

⁴⁶ Decatur, 229.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 51.

⁴⁸ *Journal of William Maclay* (quoted in Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 53).

A truly trying ceremony! It is only fair to say that Washington was suffering all the while from toothache. His deafness, too, may help to account in some measure for his reluctance to enter more readily into conversation at the dinner-table. Maclay notes that the dinner, *qua* dinner, was excellent—"the best of the kind I ever was at."

In the bosom of his family or among intimate friends Washington could be very different—"when in a lively mood, so full of pleasantry, so agreeable to all with whom he was associated, that I could hardly realise that he was the same Washington whose dignity awed all who approached him," as his nephew, Howell Lewis, said of him.⁴⁹ And even at State Dinners—when not unduly harassed by the course of public affairs—he could be genuinely cheerful and conversable. Abigail Adams, writing to her daughter in February, 1791, after a dinner at the Market Street house, says:

On Thursday last I dined with the President, in company with the ministers and ladies of the court. He was more than usually social. . . . He asked affectionately after you and the children, and at table picked the sugarplums from a cake, and requested me to take them for Master John.⁵⁰

In the customary routine of the President's day, his early rising gave him time for not a little reading before breakfast and inspection of his stables. Or, if the weather were fine, he might ride. His breakfasts unlike those of many people at the time were frugal; Indian cakes, honey and tea were important breakfast items, and there might be sliced tongue or cold sliced ham.⁵¹ After breakfast, work with his secretaries, consultations with cabinet members and, perhaps, seeing special visitors, kept him busy till dinner time which, except on Tuesdays (levee days) and Thursdays, was three o'clock. After dinner, he generally rode or, possibly, took a bit of exercise by walking. It was at such times that Washington probably embraced the opportunity to pay informal calls on the Bingham, Mrs. Samuel Powel, or others of the pleasure-loving coterie, whose society he greatly enjoyed. These calls were certainly "helpful breaks in the routine and worry of his much-circumscribed existence."⁵²

After supper, at eight, Lear or Washington would read aloud to the family, and everybody would be in bed by ten.⁵³ Special events, of course, frequently interrupted the regularity of this week-day programme, but the Sunday schedule, when no company was invited to the house, followed a set pattern. After breakfast, Washington read aloud a chapter from the Bible. Then the whole family went to church. The afternoon the President devoted to writing personal letters and his

⁴⁹ Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 310.

⁵⁰ Letter of Mrs. John Adams (quoted in Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 206).

⁵¹ Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 67, 174.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 290.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 67.

weekly instructions to his manager at Mount Vernon. Mrs. Washington often went to church again in the afternoon and took the children with her. After supper, Lear read aloud a sermon or some extracts from a religious book. Everybody went to bed early.⁵⁴

The household expense account books supply a peculiarly intimate insight into the domestic life of the family at 190, High Street. Reading between the lines, and putting two and two together with what we know from other sources, we can reconstruct a trustworthy picture of the members of the household, especially of the head, during their residence in Philadelphia.⁵⁵

When they came, Nelly Custis was about eleven and George Washington Parke Custis—always called Washington by the family—was about nine. Glancing at random through the revealing expense accounts, we pick up such items as the toys bought for the children; school books purchased; their attendance at dancing-school; the shows they were taken to see; and the clothes they had. We know when little Washington had the measles and when Nelly had the toothache—on three separate occasions “phials of essence for toothache,” at twenty-five cents each, were needed and, a little later, Mrs. Washington receives twelve dollars “to pay M. Whitlock for filing Miss Elr Custis’s teeth.” We learn how much was the duty charged on the London harpsichord for Nelly; who taught her French and drawing and arithmetic; who instructed her in embroidery and tambour-work; and who gave her music lessons—the best musicians in the country—and how much they were paid. There is like evidence of young Washington’s educational progress through the years and, at the same time, of the unfailing tenderness and affection shown both children by their grandmother and by their father-by-adoption alike. In short, we get a progressive picture of them until Nelly is blossoming into young womanhood and Washington is ready to go to Princeton.⁵⁶

Tobias Lear, before the removal from New York City to Philadelphia, had married Mary Long, a childhood friend from Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and the Washingtons had invited her to become a member of the family, a thoughtful, kindly gesture they never had cause to regret.⁵⁷ Polly Lear soon made herself a warm place in the hearts of both the President and Mrs. Washington. She unobtrusively took many of the burdens of housekeeping off Mrs. Washington’s shoulders and assumed responsibility for the details connected with the drawing-rooms and other entertaining. The President and Mrs. Washington alike grew as fond of her as they were of her much-trusted husband. When Benjamin Lincoln Lear was born in the Market Street house, in March, 1791, the President and Mrs. Washington

showed warm affection for the baby and, at the baptism, Washington stood as godfather. Polly’s untimely death from yellow fever, in July, 1793, was a real grief to the whole family. Washington, “for the first and only time during his Presidency, broke his rule of not attending funerals and went to hers.” Her pallbearers were Hamilton, Knox, Jefferson, and three Justices of the Supreme Court.⁵⁸

In the expense accounts we catch glimpses of Mrs. Washington as an exceptionally industrious seamstress and accomplished needlewoman; likewise, as a notable housekeeper—whenever the President was away in April or May, she seized the chance to have a thorough housecleaning; and she always covered the mirrors and pictures in summer with gauze.⁵⁹ She appears, too, as a considerate neighbour, repeatedly sending some thoughtful token or other of regard to friends nearby or to kinsfolk at a distance; also, as an hospitable hostess presiding over her tea-table (for which she used the choicest tea), or planning excellent dinners, including delicacies for whose making the recipes are still treasured. Although the Steward did the actual marketing, her choice of dishes that came on the table was by no means a negligible factor.

She was a religious woman and, besides her regular attendance at church, we know (from the record of books she bought) that she read sermons, religious dissertations and Bible history, in the time after breakfast she customarily gave to devotions and reading. She also kept track of current happenings and such magazines as were then available.⁶⁰

Mrs. Washington dressed quietly but well; saw a good deal of a small circle of friends who, however, were of the sober, conservative type and had little in common with the flamboyance of the “smart set”; and she evidently enjoyed little trips with the children when she drove to pay out-of-town visits to see the Hamiltons at *The Woodlands*, to Belmont to see the Peterses, and a longer one of several days to see the Dickinsons at *The Hermitage* in New Jersey.⁶¹

But, above all, we see her as the devoted wife and the affectionate and indulgent grandmother. She was exceeding fond of children and did not confine her tenderness and concern to Nelly and her brother Washington, but showed a lively and enduring interest in little Benjamin Lincoln Lear and also in the other youngsters among the numerous family connection.⁶² Her indulgence, however, did not extend to any relaxing of wholesome discipline—she made Nelly practise her daily time on the harpsichord, notwithstanding that young lady’s often disinclination and occasional tears. And, in 1794,

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁵⁵ *Household Expense Account, 1793–1797*. MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 41, 42, 76, 77.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁵⁵ *Household Expense Account, 1793–1797*. MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 128.

she bought a parrot. That bird turns up later in the chronicle.

In the household expense accounts are so many different sidelights on the less-known aspects of Washington's personality that one scarce knows which to put first. In constant procession "poor sailors," "distressed Frenchmen," "distressed women," "old soldiers," and cripples troop through the pages.⁶³ The President has seen them when out walking with Major Jackson and Tobias Lear, or else they have applied at the door of the Market Street house. Tobias Lear and, after him, Bartholomew Dandridge, duly noted them all and what they received—anywhere from one dollar to three dollars each. One distressed Frenchman got five dollars. Then there are such entries as

gave by order of the President towards building a Catholic Church in Philada. . . . \$50.00⁶⁴

Or, again,

delivd the President to put into the hands of Dr. White to be distributed among the poor of Philada. . . . \$250.00⁶⁵

This was given especially for the relief of those in dire want because of the yellow fever plague in the autumn of 1793. In a letter of December 31, 1793, to Bishop White, the President had written:

it has been my intention ever since my return to the city, to contribute my mite towards the relief of the *most* needy inhabitants of it. The pressure of public business hitherto has suspended, but not altered my resolution. I am at a loss, however, for whose benefit to apply the little I can give and in whose hands to place it . . . and therefore have taken the liberty of asking your advice.⁶⁶

The money was turned over to the Bishop soon afterwards.

At New Year's the watchmen and the newspaper carriers always got a remembrance at the President's house⁶⁷ though, so far as the carriers were concerned, this gratuity was really acquiescence to a "hold-up" rather than a voluntary token of good will. Each paper had its own carriers, and it was then the custom for each carrier at New Year's to leave the several subscribers on his route a large elaborately-printed sheet of seasonal verses⁶⁸—which might be taken as a hint. The pecuniary response from each house was an expected perquisite of the carrier's job, and resentment at any failure to take the hint could have been shown in various annoying ways.

The President's tribute to this carrier levy was heavier than most people paid, for he was an assiduous newspaper reader—scanned them closely to gauge public opinion—and for some time took in all of them. But

⁶³ *Household Expense Accounts*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Letter to Bishop White, in Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 270.

⁶⁷ *Household Expense Account*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁶⁸ MS. Collection, Library Company of Philadelphia.

when the opposition sheets became rabidly insulting and scurrilous (especially Freneau's and Bache's), he dropped his subscriptions; he felt it inconsistent to support publications inimical to the country's interests. He always managed, however, to get hold of copies to see what they were saying.⁶⁹

What they said must sorely have tried his patience many a time, but particularly during the Gallomania epidemic, with Genêt and the frenzied Francophiles flouting every official and civil decency, encouraging the while a mob hysteria that impelled "citizens" and "citizenesses" to don the *bonnet rouge*, go along the streets shouting the Marseillaise or *Ça ira*, and perform clownish antics of disrespect—contumelious excesses so enraging to Federalists that some of them, from sheer force of temperamental reaction, celebrated the birthday of George III, in 1793, by a public dinner at Richardet's tavern and toasted His Majesty, King George III, Queen Charlotte, the Prince of Wales, and George Washington!⁷⁰

The President's practice (already alluded to) of buying tickets for the servants to go to the circus or some other amusement was not the only way in which from time to time he showed a considerate attitude toward the personal contentment of his domestics. Sometimes it would be "Liniment for Hercules" or "pills for Hercules. . . 2/6," or it might be, as a special treat, tickets for "Mrs. Washington's maids to go to the circus," or, when the entry was made, "Gave a man who had a very sagacious Dog, for the Family to see his performance . . . \$3.00," one can reasonably assume that the servants, also, were interested spectators.⁷¹

His invariable treatment of dependents shows that Washington was sensible of the individual's inherent dignity, irrespective of walk in life. That he felt every servant, as an individual, was entitled to respect, and would brook no improper conduct toward anyone in his employ, appears from an incident Charles Biddle gives in his *Autobiography*. Asked if he remembered General Washington, an aged Philadelphia mechanic had answered, "General Washington? Oh yes, I remember General Washington well. I once see General Washington kick a fellow downstairs." With a fellow journeyman he had gone early one morning to do a job of painting or glazing at the Market Street house. As the maid who had let them in led them upstairs, the journeyman attempted some liberties with her. She shrieked and that brought Washington out into the hall, half-dressed and half-shaved. Hearing the girl's story, his wholesome, red-blooded wrath burst forth like a very whirlwind. Roaring out, "I will have no woman insulted in my house," he gave the offender a kick that sent him reeling down the stair, and accompanied the

⁶⁹ Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 47.

⁷⁰ Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, Book of clippings in Hist. Soc. Penna., ch. cccxv.

⁷¹ *Household Expense Account*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

kick with appropriately vigorous language. He then called to Tobias Lear to throw the scoundrel out the front door.⁷²

As to amusements for the President and Mrs. Washington, the children and the "Gentlemen of the Family," besides Ricketts's Circus, with its feats of horsemanship, and the theatre, which they all often enjoyed, there were such occasional diversions (all noted in the expense accounts) as visits to Peale's Museum, concerts now and then (for Mrs. Washington and Nelly), the "automatons" (likewise for Mrs. Washington and Nelly), "tumbling feats" (Washington Custis), balloon ascensions, the "panorama" (the President and Mrs. Washington), the itinerant "Elephant" and the likewise itinerant "Sea leopard." These two last the President went to see, probably with Lear or one of the children; he rarely missed seeing any strange or rare animal.⁷³

There are frequent entries of one dollar each for eight tickets for the theatre; also many entries for engaging a box. The President and Mrs. Washington often entertained in this way. It was usually to the New Theatre (in Chestnut Street above Sixth) they went, but occasionally, when there was an especially good bill at the Old Southwark Theatre (in South Street), they went there, as on June 5, 1792, when the President had taken eleven tickets. In his *History of the Philadelphia Stage*, Durang recalls that

The east stage box . . . was fitted up expressly for the reception of General Washington. Over the front of the box was the United States coat of arms. Red drapery was gracefully festooned in the interior and about the exterior. The seats and front were cushioned. Mr. Wignell, in a full dress of black, hair powdered and adjusted to the formal fashion of the day, with two silver candlesticks and wax candles, would thus await the general's arrival at the box-door entrance, and, with great refinement of address and courtly manners, conduct this best of public men and suite to his box. A guard of the military attended. A soldier was generally posted at each stage-door, and four were posted in the gallery, assisted by the high constable of the city and other police officers, to preserve something like decorum among the sons of social liberty.⁷⁴

Theatre audiences at that time were apt to be noisy and disorderly.

In recalling the household life of "190, High Street," one should not forget that, as a citizen of Philadelphia for seven years of his Presidency, Washington entered into and took a lively interest in Philadelphia activities, institutions and social life. He was a member of the American Philosophical Society (to which he had been elected in 1780);⁷⁵ also, along with his close friend, Judge Peters, of *Belmont*, and Thomas Jefferson, a member of the Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture (founded in 1785, the oldest agricultural society

in the country, and still active).⁷⁶ He was closely identified with the Free Masons and, wherever he might be—at Mount Vernon, in New York City, or at Philadelphia—he held an exalted status. The President always keenly enjoyed dancing and, even in his later years when he himself no longer danced, he was prone to watch the dancers. He and Mrs. Washington time and again attended the balls of the City Dancing Assembly and several of the balls, indeed, were held especially in his honour.⁷⁷ An honorary member of the Library Company of Philadelphia by action of the Directors, January 18, 1791,⁷⁸ it is reasonable to assume that he made use of the Library Company's collection when he wished books dealing with political history and the theory of government, or with husbandry and the agricultural matters in which he ever felt so deep a concern.

If we know little of Washington's book purchases beyond a copy of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and two sets of a serially-issued encyclopaedia (noted in the household accounts), there is no reason to suppose his Philadelphia house was barren of books. What books he may have brought up from Mount Vernon, or what books he may have bought that were not recorded in the household accounts, we do not know. We do know, however, that there was a respectable library at Mount Vernon, which he willed to Bushrod Washington along with the house.⁷⁹

In the matter of pictures, the household accounts are more enlightening. In April, 1793, is the entry

pd Mr. Winstanley for two paintings of views on the North River, 30 guineas. . . . \$140.00

Mr. Winstanley was evidently paid in Pennsylvania pounds, with the equivalent in dollars noted afterwards. Again, about a year later, we find,

pd Wm Winstanley for 2 large Paintings. . . . \$93.33

Towards the end of the year occurs,

pd Wm Robertson for painting two pictures of the President & one of Mrs. Washington. . . . \$170.00

while, less than two months before leaving the city for good, we find,

pd Saml Salter in full for two paintings by Beck—framing sundry pictures &c. . . . \$158.75.

Besides these, there is still extant a long inventory of prints and paintings belonging to the President, made when he was about to leave the Market Street house. Complete lists of all the furnishings were then prepared, showing in parallel columns what belonged to the Government and what was the President's personal property.⁸⁰ What things of his own he did not wish to take

⁷² *Autobiography of Charles Biddle*, 285, Phila., 1883.

⁷³ *Household Expense Account*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

⁷⁴ Durang, *History of the Philadelphia stage* (quoted in Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 269).

⁷⁵ Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 207.

⁷⁶ *Minutes*, Philadelphia Society for Promoting Agriculture.

⁷⁷ Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 233, 272, 279.

⁷⁸ *Minutes*, Library Company of Philadelphia.

⁷⁹ *Household Expense Accounts*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.; Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 313.

⁸⁰ Lists in MS. Division, Library of Congress.

to Mount Vernon were to be sold at auction and, at the end of the list of articles from the Green Drawing Room (the large bow-windowed room above the State Dining Room) "which may be purchased although the sale of them is not desired," we find "2 Landscapes"—one of the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers, the other of the Federal City—which "cost me with the frames 30 Guineas." [This in Washington's handwriting.] Some of the prints were evidently very choice impressions.

Constantly recurring entries in the household expense accounts draw attention to the bills for horse feed and stable needs. The bills were large. In view of Washington's own superb horsemanship, his love of horses and his refusal to have anything but the best in horseflesh or in anything pertaining to horse equipment, this not surprising. He always had twelve or more horses, and those for which there was no place in his twelve-stalled stable he boarded out. The coach house held the state coach (fit only for city use or where the roads were fairly good), the chariot (which was really a smaller, lighter coach), the phaeton, and the baggage waggon.

Whereas a private citizen could have got along quite comfortably and respectably with a much smaller establishment, Washington felt it required every bit of what he maintained to uphold properly the dignity of his public office, no matter how burdensome the cost. His blooded bays, his famous white chargers, his hammer-cloth and the postillions' saddle cloths of leopard-skin trimmed with scarlet and gold braid,⁸¹ and his white or cream-coloured liveries turned up with scarlet were essential that the equipage of the Chief Executive might not appear meaner in the eyes of the public than that of some of the wealthy citizens.

The other heavy and regularly repeated bills are for food and drink. The immediate family of eight, with twenty servants besides, normally consumed a large quantity of food, day in and day out. Add to this the requirements for the weekly drawing-rooms and state dinners, oftentimes with twenty to thirty guests, to say nothing of the New Year's Day, Birthday, and Fourth of July receptions, and the many "family dinners" with three or four guests, and the total becomes amazing. And Mrs. Washington and the steward were generous providers; there was never any niggard stinting. No wonder that cyder had to be bought by the barrel, sugar by the barrel, and molasses by the hogshead, and Madeira by the pipe.⁸²

The President himself (as already stated) was abstemious in both food and drink, but most people at that period, and for many years after—in Philadelphia, at least—ate entirely too much, even if they paid up for it in subsequent discomfort. The tables fairly groaned.

⁸¹ *Letters and recollections of George Washington*, 30; Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 25, 26.

⁸² *Household Expense Accounts*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.; Letters of Tobias Lear, Library of Congress.

John Adams was quite justified in his frequent deprecation of "sinful feasts."

The cost of all this hospitality made serious inroads on the President's purse in spite of careful avoidance of extravagance and an ever-watchful hold on the purse-strings, first by Tobias Lear and afterwards by Bartholomew Dandridge. Washington's abhorrence of undue expense for the table appeared in the shad incident while "Black Sam" was steward.⁸³ Fraunces, on one of his marketing tours in early spring, had espied a fine shad, the first of the season, bought it heedless of the high price, and served it at breakfast the next morning, thinking chiefly of the President's fondness for fish. The President asked what it might be. Told it was shad, he enquired the price. "Black Sam" reluctantly admitted he'd paid three dollars for it. This reckless prodigality so incensed Washington that he ordered the shad straightway removed and soundly scolded "Black Sam." The fish was highly appreciated at the servants' table!

"Always a careful business man, Washington was noted for his *penchant* for buying at the lowest figures obtainable," but he was in no wise cheese-paring nor disposed to haggle about paying a fair price, and he would never sacrifice quality to cheapness.⁸⁴ Though rated a wealthy man, his wealth was not fluid and the receipts of his private income were often long overdue in reaching him; time and again he was put to it to find ready money to meet the heavy expenses his public office laid upon him. The President's salary—a really experimental allowance at that period—was not enough to defray the costs of his establishment, and he was loath to ask Congress to increase the appropriation; consequently, he often paid out of his own pocket what were legitimate Government charges. Economy, therefore, was imperative, but the practice of economy imposed a difficult problem, especially towards the end of Washington's administration, for the cost of living had soared⁸⁵—and in Philadelphia above most other places—so that even well-to-do people, who had no public obligations, were feeling sore pinched. Under the circumstances, one can readily understand John Adams writing to Mrs. Adams, December 30, 1796, "The President says he must sell something to enable him to clear out."⁸⁶

It was with genuine relief that Washington laid down his office and prepared to return to Mount Vernon. On Thursday, March 2, 1797,

⁸³ Decatur, *Private affairs of George Washington*, 252. "He regularly dined on Saturday on a 'salt fish dinner' consisting of boiled beets, potatoes and onions mixed with the boiled fish and covered with fried pork scraps and egg sauce." *Ibid.*, 222.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 13, 22.

⁸⁵ C. F. Adams, *Letters of John Adams to his wife* 2: 235, Boston, 1841.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, *passim*.

the Rector, Church Wardens and Vestrymen of the United Episcopal Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's waited on the President of the United States with an Address.⁸⁷

That same evening he wrote General Knox,

To-morrow at dinner I shall, as a servant of the public, take my leave of the President elect, of the foreign characters, the heads of departments, &c., and the day following, with pleasure, I shall witness the inauguration of my successor to the chair of government.⁸⁸

On Saturday, the fourth, he attended the inauguration of President Adams at noon. Later, the same day, the Merchants of Philadelphia gave him a great testimonial dinner at Ricketts's Circus.⁸⁹ Thereafter he was free to attend the thousand-and-one odds and ends incident to packing up and removal. On Thursday morning, March 9, he and his family got off at seven o'clock for Mount Vernon.⁹⁰ Tobias Lear and Bartholomew Dandridge stayed behind to see to the packing up and removal of the household goods and to make the Market Street house ready, so far as they could, for the reception of President and Mrs. Adams.

On his way southward, Washington showed the same solicitude about the packing and clearing up as he had, seven years before, during the removal from New York City to Philadelphia. Having got as far as Chester, he wrote Tobias Lear:

Thus far we have arrived safe, but found it disagreeably cold.

To give the greater surety to the large looking Glasses, and such other articles as are liable to be injured by the jolting of a dray; be so good as to have taken down by hand, and stowed where they will not be trod on; or tossed about in the Vessel's hold.

. . . The bedstead which Nelly Custis slept on belongs (Mrs. Washington says) to me. Let this and the trundle under it be sent in the Vessel.

Mr. Hill told me he had done something (but what I do not recollect) with the livery clothes; I pray you to enquire and know they are sent around.

The newly published Pamphlets, pray purchase, and bring with you for me; Mr. Dandridge knows what I already have. Desire Peter Porcupine's Gazette to be sent to me (as a Subscriber).

When the point at which the Vessel can sail is ascertained; advise me of it by letter. I wish you & all with you, every thing you wish yourselves—and am Sincerely & Affectionately

Yrs.

P.S.

On one side I am called upon to remember the Parrot, on the other to remember the dog. For my own part I should not pine much if both were forgot.⁹¹

⁸⁷ W. S. Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 342.

⁸⁸ Washington to General Knox, Baker, *Washington after the Revolution*, 343.

⁸⁹ Eberlein and Hubbard, *Diary of Independence Hall*, 337, 338.

⁹⁰ Claypoole's *American Daily Advertiser*, March 10, 1797.

⁹¹ *Letters and Recollections of George Washington*, 114-116.

Lear and Dandridge had on their hands a complicated and trying job. Before Washington went to New York City in 1789, Congress had already bought much of the furniture for the house they had engaged for him.⁹² All of this furniture was brought to Philadelphia, along with other equipment Washington had supplied himself. All the Government furniture was now to be left in the Market Street house for the Adamses; Washington's personal possessions were to be shipped to Mount Vernon by boat. Such things as he did not need, or wish to take to Mount Vernon, were to be sold at auction in Philadelphia, the proceeds to cancel, so far as possible, some of the extra expenses incurred in maintaining the Presidential establishment. At the end of the already mentioned parallel list of Government and Presidential property, and on the Government side of the last sheet, is a pen-drawn hand pointing with index finger to this note in Washington's handwriting:

Nothing herein has been said relatively to the Table Linnen, Sheeting, China and Glass-ware which was furnished at the expence of the United States, because they have been worn out, broken, stolen and replaced (at private expence) over & over again.

Nor has any account been taken of the Kitchen furniture, as that also, except a few of the most durable articles, (which will be left) has been broke, burnt out, & otherwise reduced as above—The Carpets also are entirely worn out.—all on the floors, at present, have been purchased on private account.⁹³

On the fifteenth Lear wrote Washington that the goods were duly loaded on the sloop *Salem*, chartered to sail direct to Mount Vernon. He continued,

The House is now preparing for the President, and he purposes to come in on Monday next, when I presume everything will be in as good order as it can be put.⁹⁴

(Before leaving, Washington had given urgent orders that the house should be thoroughly cleaned and put in the best possible order against the arrival of the Adamses.) Then the same letter goes on:

The furniture of the Green Drawing Room & other Articles sold at Auction went off very low indeed.—The numbers attending the Auction was considerable; but they were disappointed in an expectation which they had formed that the Paintings, Prints &c. were to have been sold.—The Lustres, Stoves & other fixtures in the House will be taken by the President at cost or a fair valuation.—There is nothing to be Sold of the public furniture.⁹⁵

Lear's accounts show this entry for March 13, 1797:

Recd of Footman & Co. for acct of articles sold at Vendue the 10th Inst. \$501.45⁹⁶

The accounts further show, on March 25:

recd of Mrs. Powel for a writing Desk. \$245.00

⁹² List, MS. Division, Library of Congress.

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ Letter of Tobias Lear, MS. Division, Library of Congress.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Household Expense Account*, MS. Hist. Soc. Penna.

This was the French roll-top desk, with a low brass gallery around the top, which Mrs. Samuel Powel bought after the auction; the same now in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The "good Sloop called the Salem," Joshua Elkins master, sailed for Mount Vernon laden with 97 boxes, 14 trunks, 43 casks, 13 packages, 3 hampers, 7 band-boxes, 1 large carpet, numerous Venetian blinds, 1 ton of iron and, amongst sundry other miscellaneous articles enumerated in a long bill of lading,⁹⁷ "one Cage" (which doubtless belonged to the Parrot) and "one Tin shower bath." One would like to know just what this last was like. The *Salem* bore away the last jumbled remnants from an exodus of the most distinguished establishment that graced eighteenth-century Philadelphia.

John Adams was by no means a wealthy man. For some time after it was pretty certain that he would be the next President, the prospect of having to keep up a far more expensive establishment than he could possibly afford worried him grievously. The price of horses and a chariot—indispensable as they were to his office as Chief Executive—worried him, too. On December 30, 1796, he wrote Mrs. Adams (then in Quincy):

I have made some inquiry concerning horses and carriages and find that a common chariot of the plainest sort cannot be had under twelve hundred dollars, and if you go to a little more ornament and elegance, you must give fifteen hundred. The President has a pair of horses to sell, one, nine, the other, ten years old, for which he asks a thousand dollars, and there is no probability of procuring a decent span for less than six hundred dollars.⁹⁸

Along with this worry about chariot and horses, he was in a state of harrowing suspense about whether he would be expected to live in the Market Street house when the Washingtons had left it. On the eleventh of January, after going to the President's levee and then for a chat with Mrs. Washington—still uncertain about where he will live—wryly amused, he writes Mrs. Adams:

Kidd [Kitt, who had become the President's steward] was very active and busy for Jefferson. This was from jealousy of Briesler [the Adamses' faithful major-domo], no doubt. He expected that Jefferson would have taken him, I suppose. . . .⁹⁹

With future place of residence no further settled, his letter of February 4 to Mrs. Adams wails:

House rent at twenty-seven hundred dollars a year, fifteen hundred for a carriage, one thousand for one pair of horses, all the glasses, ornaments, kitchen furniture, the best china, settees, plateaus, &c., all to purchase, all the china, delph or wedgwood, glass and crockery of every sort to purchase, and not a farthing probably will the House of Representatives allow, though the Senate have voted a small addition. All the linen besides. I shall not pretend to keep more than

one pair of horses for a carriage, and one for a saddle. Secretaries, servants, wood, charities which are demanded as rights, and the million dittoes present such a prospect as is enough to disgust any one. Yet not one word must we say.¹⁰⁰

On February 8 the votes were counted and Adams then, beyond all peradventure, was assured of the Presidency. But disquieting uncertainty still haunted him. The next day he wrote Mrs. Adams:

I must wait to know whether Congress will do any thing or not to furnish my house. If they do not, I will have no house before next fall, and then a very moderate one, with very moderate furniture.¹⁰¹

At last on Sunday, March 5, the day after his inauguration, the new President is feeling easier in mind. After all his distressing suspense, the uncertainty about his future dwelling is ended and he writes Mrs. Adams:

It is now settled that I am to go into his [Washington's] house. . . . My chariot is finished, and I made my first appearance in it yesterday. It is simple but elegant enough. My horses are young, but clever.

On the ninth he writes:¹⁰²

The house is to be cleared and cleaned, and I am to go into it on Monday next [the 13th], if possible. I shall make a small establishment for myself for the present, and wait your advice for ulterior arrangements. [Then, two days later] . . . The family is gone. Mr. Lear and Mr. Dandridge remain, but it is a great work to arrange and clean the house. I can't get into it before the middle of next week.¹⁰³

He was doomed to disappointment about the date for, on March 20, Lear wrote Washington:

The business of packing up, cleaning the House, and putting every thing in order took up more time than I was aware of; tho' no time was lost in doing these things; yet it was not till Saturday [the 18th] that we were able to get out of the House, and it will be some days yet before Mr. Adams can take up his *own* residence in it as they are putting new Carpets on the floors and talk of having the Rooms painted.¹⁰⁴

On the seventeenth, when the prospect seemed brighter, Adams had written:

I hope to get into my house Monday next [He didn't], but shall purchase no nice furniture till you come. [All the *Government* furnishings had remained in the house.] I shall make a little establishment for myself and keep bachelors' hall for some time. I have procured some horses and a carriage, and ride on horseback as often as the weather will permit.¹⁰⁵

"Bachelors' hall" lasted until May 10, when Mrs. Adams arrived, preceded by Brisler and some of the

⁹⁷ Bill of Lading, MS. Division, Library of Congress.

⁹⁸ C. F. Adams, *Letters of John Adams to his wife* 2: 235.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 238.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 242.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 243.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 244.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 246, 249.

¹⁰⁴ Letter of Tobias Lear, MS. Division, Library of Congress.

¹⁰⁵ *Letters of John Adams* 2: 251.

servants she had brought down from New England.¹⁰⁶ In delicate health, the journey had so fatigued her that she had to go to bed for several days. Her coming, however, had put the establishment on a fairly normal basis, and the following Tuesday (May 16) she wrote her sister:

Yesterday being Monday, from 12 to half past two I received visits, 32 Ladies and near as many Gentlemen. I shall have the same ceremony to pass through to day, and the rest part of the week. As I am not prepared with furniture for a Regular drawing Room, I shall not commence one I believe, as the Summer is to near at hand, and my Health very precarious. At the Winter Sessions I shall begin. . . .

Evening 8 oclock

The day is past, and a fatiguing one it has been. The Ladies of Foreign Ministers and the Ministers, with our own Secretaries & Ladies have visited me to day, and add to them, the whole Levee to day of senate & house. Strangers &c making near one Hundred asked permission to visit me, so that from half past 12 till near 4, I was rising up & sitting down. . . .¹⁰⁷

On the twenty-fourth Mrs. Adams writes her sister again:

I keep up my old Habit of rising at an early hour. If I did not I should have little command of my Time. At 5 I rise. From that time till 8 I have a few leisure hours. At 8 I breakfast, after which untill Eleven I attend to my Family arrangements. At that hour I dress for the day. From 12 until two I receive company, sometimes untill 3. We dine at that hour unless on company days which are tuesdays & thursdays. After dinner I usually ride out untill seven. I begin to feel a little more at Home, and less anxiety about the ceremonious part of my duty, tho by not having a drawing Room for the summer I am obliged every day, to devote two Hours for the purpose of seeing company. Tomorrow we are to dine the Secretaries of State &c with the whole Senate. [About 38 guests.] The Male domesticks I leave wholly to Brisler to hire and to dismiss; the Female I have none but those I brought with me, except a Negro woman who is wholly with the Cook in the kitchen. . . .¹⁰⁸

The official routine is fairly established and the machinery running smoothly, but Abigail looks forward with anxiety to the Fourth of July. In her letter of June 23 to Sister Cranch she says:

To day will be the 5th great dinner I have had, about 36 Gentlemen to day, as many more next week, and I shall have got through the whole of Congress, with their apendages.¹⁰⁹

Then she continues:

Then comes the 4 July which is a still more tedious day, as we must then have not only all Congress, but all the Gentlemen of the city, the Governour and all officers and companies, all of whom the late President used to treat with cake, punch and wine. What the House would not hold used to be placed at long tables in the yard. As we are

here, we cannot avoid the trouble nor the expence. I have been informed the day used to cost the late President 500 dollors. More than 200 wt of cake used to be expended, and 2 quarter casks of wine besides spirit. You will not wonder that I dread it, or think President Washington to blame for introducing the custom, if he could have avoided it. Congress never were present here before on the day, so that I shall have a Hundred & 50 of them in addition to the other company. Long tables are sit in the House with similar entertainment. I hope the day will not be Hot. I am like to be favoured with a cool one to day at which I rejoice, for it is no small task to be sit [*sic*] at table with 30 Gentlemen.¹¹⁰

The ordeal of July 4 was not so bad as she expected. Writing two days later, she tells Sister Cranch:

I got through the 4 July with much more ease than I expected. It was a fine cool day, and my fatigue arose chiefly from being drest at an early hour, and receiving the very numerous sets of company who were so polite as to pay their compliments to me in succession in my drawing Room after visiting the President below, and partaking of cake, wine & punch with him. To my company were added the Ladies of foreign Ministers & Home Secretaries with a few others. The parade lasted from 12 till four oclock.¹¹¹

The customary round of Presidential hospitalities continued smoothly whether Mrs. Adams was able to preside or whether her indispositions devolved her duties as hostess upon her niece, Louisa Smith, who lived with them. Abigail's letters to Sister Cranch, though largely taken up with their relatives' affairs and doings; with denouncing the misdoings of the anti-Federalists; with discussing fashions and the doings of some members of society; and with directions for the establishment at Quincy, also include much that has more or less bearing on the story of the Market Street house.

She goes *incognita* to the first rendition of Hopkinson's "Hail, Columbia" at the New Theatre;¹¹² she describes the scare, in 1798, over the reputed plot of French residents in the city and French sympathisers to burn the city,¹¹³ and the consequent assurance of loyalty when 1100 young men "from 18 to 23" came to present an address, the President in uniform to meet them, and the whole house thrown open to receive them; of the immediately ensuing disorders in the State House Yard, when the "light Horse were calld out & patrolld the streets all Night" and a "gaurd was placed before this House";¹¹⁴ and of the alarums of war, together with the bitter political wranglings and animosities that so sadly disturbed the President's peace of mind as long as he lived in Philadelphia.

Up to the last, the wonted public functions were maintained. On New Year's Day, 1799, Mrs. Adams was away but the President wrote her:

¹⁰⁶ *New letters of Abigail Adams, 1788-1801*, ed. Stewart Mitchell, 89, 90, Boston, Houghton, 1947.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 90, 91.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 91.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 99.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 100.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 164-165.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 172.



FIG. 4. From water-colour sketch now in possession of Richard Norris Williams II. Made by Mason in 1832 just before the building was demolished. The marks of the original window and door pediments were still visible on the wall after the house was converted to commercial use.

We had more company to-day than ever upon any occasion. Thirty or forty gallons of punch, wine in proportion and cake in abundance.¹¹⁵

At the end of December, 1799, soon after having news of General Washington's death, Mrs. Adams wrote:

Last frydays drawing Room was the most crowded of any I ever had. Upwards of a hundred Ladies, and near as many Gentlemen attended all in mourning. The Ladies Grief did not deprive them of taste in ornamenting their white dresses; 2 yds of Black mode in length, of the narrow kind pleated upon one shoulder. . . . Others wore black Epulets of Black silk trimd with fringe upon each shoulder, black Ribbon in points upon the Gown. . . . Their caps were crape with black plumes or black flowers. Black

¹¹⁵ C. F. Adams, *Letters of John Adams to his wife* 2: 258.

Gloves & fans. The Gentlemen all in Black. . . . The assembly Room is burnt down, and they have not any place to display their gay attire but the drawing Room and private parties, and as they expect it will be the last winter they will have the opportunity, they intend shining.¹¹⁶

On January 30, 1800, Abigail writes:

I am sure we have never had so many Congress Ladies since I first came here. . . . We have had large companies twice every week besides the drawing Rooms; and I have not near got through. Next week the Court & Bar are to dine with us. . . .¹¹⁷

Almost the last festivity in the Market Street house was an impromptu dance. At the end of April, 1800, Abigail writes:

My last drawing Room is notified for the 2nd of May. On Thursday we had 28 young or rather unmarried Ladies and Gentlemen to dine with us. They were from Families with which our young people have been most intimate, and who had shewn them many attentions & civilities. Just before I rose from table, Thomas [Boylston Adams] came round to me and whispered me, have you any objection to my having a dance this Evening? None in the world, provided it comes thus accidental. The company soon came up to the drawing Room to Tea, and in an hours time, the tables were removed, the lights light & the Room all in order. At 8 the dancing commenced. At 12, it finishd. More pleasure, ease and enjoyment I have rarely witnessd. The President went down about an hour & then retired. I tarried it out, but was obliged to go to Bed at 8 oclock last night in consequence. Several of the company declared that they should always remember the Evening as one of the pleasentest of their lives. . . .¹¹⁸

President Adams left Philadelphia on May 27, 1800, on a visit to the Federal City. Mrs. Adams went to Quincy, where the President later joined her. Mrs. Adams's next letter from Philadelphia is dated November 10, 1800. She writes her sister:

I arrived in this City last Evening & came to the old House now occupied by Francis as a Hotel. Tho' the furniture and arrangement of the House is changed I feel more at home here than I should any where else in the city, and when sitting with my son [Thomas Boylston Adams] & other friends who call to see me, I can scarcely persuade myself, that tomorrow I must quit it, for an unknown & an unseen abode.¹¹⁹

The house was demolished in 1832.

¹¹⁶ *New letters of Abigail Adams*, 225.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 231.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 247.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 254.

THE CHARITY SCHOOL, THE ACADEMY, AND THE COLLEGE

Fourth and Arch Streets

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ON Monday morning, January 8, 1751, the attention of Philadelphia centered upon a large brick edifice at the corner of Fourth and Arch Streets, toward which moved a procession of distinguished citizens, led by the provincial governor. The occasion of this public ceremony was the opening of the Academy of Philadelphia, and the dedication of the handsome building facing Fourth Street to its use [C, II]. The morning's activities were, in a sense, a tribute to the indefatigable zeal of Benjamin Franklin, whose *Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania* had initiated in 1749 the movement to establish an Academy, and whose business acumen had secured the institution's building and grounds.

Aware of the role of location in the development of the Academy, Franklin had applied the measuring-stick of utility to each site proposed. The search for a desirable property ended, when—in his words—"Providence threw into our way a large house ready built, which, with a few alterations, might well serve our purpose."¹ This "large house" was the Whitefield tabernacle on Fourth Street, which—to Franklin's appraising eye—provided the Academy with favorable conditions for growth: a convenient location in the city, space for immediate requirements, and room for expansion—all of which could be obtained at minimum cost. Accordingly, on February 1, 1750, the Whitefield property was deeded to the trustees of the Academy.²

Behind this acquisition lay earlier events, which linked the property with the first years of the eighteenth century. The land occupied by the Academy building had originally formed part of a generous lot deeded in 1703 to John Chandler by William Penn—a valuable property measuring roughly one quarter of the city block, and bounded by the new streets, Fourth and Mulberry—now Arch—on the southwest corner of their intersection.³ By his will, dated September 8, 1716, Chandler bequeathed title of this land—apparently still undeveloped—to his daughter, Mary, wife of Jonathan Price, a carpenter.⁴ In their role of property-owners, the Prices contributed indirectly to the development of the Academy, for it was their inheritance—sold piece by

piece by them between 1740 and 1754—which became the site of learning.

The impetus which first parted the Prices from a section of their property was provided by the city-wide controversy following the visit in November 1739 of the dynamic English preacher, George Whitefield. Addressing thousands on the themes of sin, regeneration, and the new birth, and attacking the complacency and dependence upon ritual of orthodox ministers, the twenty-four-year-old evangelist brought the kindling spark to the great religious revival which swept the city. Returning in April 1740, when many pulpits were denied him by a hostile clergy, Whitefield found that his followers had formulated plans to build a church for him.⁵ A desirable plot near the heart of the city had been selected, and negotiations begun with its owners—Jonathan and Mary Price. The transaction was officially consummated on September 15, 1740, when the Prices conveyed title to four representatives of Whitefield's followers: Edmund Woolley and William Price—carpenters, John Coates—brickmaker, and John Howell—mariner.⁶ In accordance with the evangelist's educational convictions, this deed specified that the edifice being built upon the property "should be appointed to the use of a Charity School for the Instruction of Poor Children *Gratis* in useful Literature and the Knowledge of the Christian Religion and also for a House of Public Worship."⁷ This dual purpose was restated in the indenture signed two months later—on November 14—by Whitefield and eight of his adherents, who had been appointed trustees of the building and its Charity School, and were charged with the selection of charity teachers.⁸

So spontaneous had been the action of Whitefield's supporters that the foundations were laid and the church begun in the summer of 1740 before legal title to the land had been officially obtained.⁹ As financial problems increased, however, construction lagged, necessitating public appeals for "either Money, or any Goods that will suit Workmen. . . ." ¹⁰ Probably completed in mid-1742, the building was used only sporadically, as the high-tide of evangelism subsided and popular in-

¹ Franklin, Benjamin, *Autobiography*, John Bigelow, ed., 239, Boston and N. Y., Houghton, Mifflin, 1906.

² Minutes of the Trustees of the Academy and Charitable School of Philadelphia, February 1, 1750. Office of the Secretary, Univ. of Penna.

³ Dulles, Charles W., *The Charity School of 1740—The foundation of the University of Pennsylvania*. Reprinted from *The Univ. of Penna. Med. Bull.* 4 f., Dec. 1904.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Whitefield, George, *A journal of a voyage from London to Savannah in Georgia* 2: 40, London, 1741.

⁶ Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Wescott, *A history of Philadelphia, 1609-1804* 2: 147 f, Phila., 1884.

⁷ Montgomery, Thomas Harrison, *A history of the University of Pennsylvania from its foundation to A.D. 1770*, 110, Phila., Jacobs, 1900.

⁸ Whitefield, *op. cit.*, 66-68.

⁹ Dulles, *op. cit.*, 5.

¹⁰ *American Weekly Mercury*, Phila., June 4, 1741.



FIG. 1. Sketch of the old Academy Buildings at Fourth and Arch Streets by Pierre Eugène DuSimitière. Original in the Library Company of Philadelphia.

terest in the itinerant ministry faded. Whitefield delivered his last evangelical message from the tabernacle's pulpit in 1746, and the structure was used only by Gilbert Tennent for Sunday services.¹¹ By 1747 the building's creditors—artisans who had never received their wages, and individuals whose loans were not repaid—demanded settlement of the accumulating debts.¹² In that year a petition was presented to the provincial Assembly, requesting the power to compel payment of bills by the trustees, or the right to sell the building.¹³

The edifice whose disposal was now sought was one of the largest structures in Philadelphia, exceeding even the State House in size.¹⁴ Measuring one hundred feet in length by seventy in width, and consisting of one "great and lofty hall," it approximated the dimensions of London's Westminster Hall—by Franklin's calculation.¹⁵ Rectangular in shape, the brick building was simply designed. Its façade presented a basic symmetry of line, achieved by its unknown architect through the use of two rows of six arched windows, interrupted in the center of the building by an arched doorway, flanked by two unadorned columns, which supported a triangular pediment. These features are preserved today in the only contemporary sketch of the building known to exist—made by Pierre Eugène DuSimitière, French naturalist, traveller, and social observer.¹⁶ The tabernacle was situated squarely in the center of a rec-

tangular lot, one hundred and fifty feet wide with a depth of one hundred and ninety-eight feet.¹⁷ The property was bounded by Fourth Street on the east, Christ Church burial ground on the west, a large plot belonging to the original Price tract on the north, and by an expanse of land to the south, partially owned by the Prices, extending to High or Market Street.

To the Academy trustees, the Whitefield building appeared an excellent buy, for its price had been set at seven hundred and seventy-five pounds, eighteen shillings, eleven pence, and three farthings—which Franklin appraised as less than half the original cost of construction.¹⁸ Through Franklin's efforts a mutually advantageous exchange was concluded. While the trustees obtained the property at a low price, the original owners stipulated in the deed of sale that the 1740 purpose of the building be executed: a Charity School and a room for itinerant preachers must be maintained.¹⁹ In accordance with this guarantee, the Charity School later was opened on September 16, 1751.²⁰

Immediately upon the purchase of the building, plans were drawn for the alteration of the interior to meet educational needs. Encouraging to the trustees was the action of the city's Common Council, which voted a contribution of two hundred pounds toward the task of renovation. The work was placed in the hands of Robert Smith, later designated "House Carpenter" of the Academy.²¹ As head of the building committee, Franklin—whom Academy trustee Richard Peters now described as "the Soul of the Whole"²²—supervised the division of the structure into two floors.²³ Of these activities, Franklin later wrote: "The care and trouble of agreeing with the workmen, purchasing materials and superintending the work, fell upon me."²⁴ While the first floor probably was separated into four large classrooms to accommodate the three Academy schools—the Latin, English, and Mathematics—and the charity classes, the second floor was devoted entirely to a meeting hall.²⁵ Totalling more than five hundred and ninety-eight pounds, and including such customary entries for "provisions" to the workmen as "Given the Bricklayers

¹⁷ Montgomery, *op. cit.*, 110.

¹⁸ Franklin to Jared Eliot, February 13, 1750, *The writings of Benjamin Franklin*, Albert H. Smyth, ed. 3: 3, N. Y., Macmillan, 1905.

¹⁹ Franklin, *Autobiography*, 240.

²⁰ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 12, 1751.

²¹ Minutes of the Trustees of the Academy and Charitable School, February 6, 1750.

²² Richard Peters to the Proprietors, February 1751, *Penn Papers* 4: 243-249, *Hist. Soc. Pa.*

²³ Franklin at first may have considered dividing the building into three floors. On February 13, 1750, he wrote to Jared Eliot, "The House is built of brick, very strong, and sufficiently high for three lofty stories." *Writings, op. cit.* 3: 2.

²⁴ *Autobiography*, 241.

²⁵ Peters Papers 4: 243-249. This was the original plan of reconstruction which Richard Peters described to Thomas Penn in a letter of October 26, 1749, but there is no record of the final distribution of space on the first floor. *Hist. Soc. Pa.*

¹¹ Cheyney, Edward Potts, *History of the University of Pennsylvania, 1740-1940*, 26, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1940.

¹² Nolan, Bennett, *Printer Strahan's book account*, 38, Reading, Pa., Bar of Berks Co., 1939.

¹³ Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania 4: 59, June 18, 1747.

¹⁴ The State House measured one hundred and seven by forty-four and a half feet. Not until 1766 with the erection of the Lutheran Church of Zion were the dimensions of the Whitefield building surpassed.

¹⁵ Franklin, *op. cit.*, 221.

¹⁶ DuSimitière Papers, Lib. Co. of Phila.

for drink 7/16,"²⁶ the initial cost of renovation was twice the original estimate.²⁷

The enormity of this expenditure delayed the completion of the auditorium until 1755. In that year, Robert Smith was commissioned to add a platform "for accommodating Trustees" and a gallery on three sides of the hall.²⁸ To admit more light into both the great hall and the staircase leading to it, there also were added "8 large circular windows and 6 large square ditto" to the end walls.²⁹ This further increased the building's number of glass panes—popular targets for schoolboy missiles—concerning which the trustees earlier had agreed "that a small ladder be bought, to be always on hand for the convenience of mending the Windows."³⁰ At the south



FIG. 2. Original bell, loaned to the Academy in 1752 by the Union and Hand-in-Hand Fire Companies, to summon scholars to classes and to be used also as a fire alarm. Inscription on the bell reads: "1752—By the Union & Hand in Hand Companies—Thomas Lester Made me." Bell now in the possession of the University of Pennsylvania.

end of the auditorium was installed in 1766 an organ, which the talented Academy alumnus, Francis Hopkinson, played with a "bold and masterful Hand" at graduations and commencements.³¹

To the exterior of the building, no change was immediately made. The broad expanse of the roof—single-gabled and wooden-shingled—suggested to Franklin, however, the possibility of architectural additions of



FIG. 3. Sketch of the Old Academy buildings and grounds showing the wall and gate erected prior to the Revolution. Original in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

practical value. When his proposal "to have an Observatory on the top"³² did not materialize, he was responsible for the erection in April 1751 of a steeple—with a pointed roof, surmounted by a ball and weather vane—to house the school bell.³³ A year later, in March 1752, he obtained the loan of a bell jointly owned by two fire companies—the Union and the Hand-in-Hand—with the provision that it sound the alarm for fires as well as advise "the Scholars of the Hours of Meeting."³⁴ Franklin's later suggestion that a clock be added to the steeple was not acted upon because of the high cost of the time-piece.³⁵ In 1760 funds were voted to add a second chimney to the school's exterior.³⁶

In 1750 the condition of the Academy lot was not entirely satisfactory, for drainage facilities were lacking—with the result that heavy rains deposited large pools of water in the yard. A remedy was agreed upon in May 1751 when it was decided "to regulate the Ground before the Academy, and to lay a Gutter along the Street. . . ."³⁷ Another problem involved the proximity of Christ Church burying ground, whose boundaries were not always respected by mischievous students. For the protection of the cemetery, a wooden fence was erected; when it needed replacement in the spring of 1754, the church agreed to pay half the expense.³⁸ Years later, in 1772, the school yard was separated from Fourth Street by a brick wall "with an Iron Gate in the Center,

³² Franklin to Cadwalader Colden, June 28, 1750, Smyth, *op. cit.* 3: 9.

³³ Minutes of the Trustees, April 9, 1751.

³⁴ Minute Book, Union Fire Company, March 29, 1752, Library Company of Philadelphia. This handsome bell—twenty-three inches in height and sixty-five inches in circumference at the base—had various wanderings after 1802, but was returned to the University of Pennsylvania in 1945.

³⁵ Minutes of the Trustees, December 12, 1752.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, January 8, 1760.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, May 14, 1751.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, April 24, 1754.

²⁶ Academy Day Book, May 2, 1750, Univ. of Penna. Archives.

²⁷ Franklin, *Writings* 3: 3.

²⁸ Minutes of the Trustees, June 30, 1755.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, November 15, 1752.

³¹ Cheyney, *op. cit.*, 142; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 8, 1760.

such as that on the Church Burying Ground," and having "a small Door near each end of the said Wall."³⁹

Even before classes began on January 7, 1751, the trustees realized the necessity of extending the school grounds, and in November 1750 they purchased two adjoining lots.⁴⁰ Not always able to buy directly from the Prices, who had sold part of their land to several individuals after 1740, the trustees consistently added nearby plots to the Academy land.⁴¹ By 1766 the property which they administered covered approximately a quarter of the city block, and was bordered by Christ Church burial ground on the west, Arch Street on the north, Fourth Street on the east, and a boundary on the south just above the present-day alley known as Commerce Street.

This extension of the grounds was a necessary accompaniment to the increasing importance of the young school. Awarded the power to grant degrees in 1755, the institution now merited the title "The College, Academy, and Charitable School of Philadelphia." The increase in Academy scholars from seventeen on January 7, 1751, to one hundred and forty-six at the end of the first year presaged a growing student body.⁴² In 1753 there were two hundred and twenty-six matriculates, sixty-five of whom—by Richard Peters' count—came from neighboring colonies.⁴³ By 1758 the combined enrollment of the three parts of the institution was three hundred and ten.⁴⁴ Adding prestige to the College and Academy were their professors: William Smith, the Anglican clergyman who was Provost of the College and teacher of philosophy and science; Vice-Provost Francis Alison, the Presbyterian cleric and experienced educator who taught the classical languages; Theophilus Grew, who taught mathematics and wrote his own textbook; and Ebenezer Kinnersley, the Baptist minister and scientist who had collaborated with Franklin in his electrical experiments, whose title was "Professor of English and Oratory." To these men, and to the twenty-four trustees—who included Philadelphia's most distinguished citizens—fell the full burden of administering the institution after 1756. In that year Franklin—deciding to devote himself entirely to public affairs—declined to serve a seventh term as President of the Board of Trustees, and in 1757 he departed for England as the agent of Pennsylvania.⁴⁵

With the growth of the institution came a change in the use of the rooms of the building. The great hall on the second floor now was appointed as the daily meeting

place of students, and utilized for a great variety of activities. Here, after the ringing of the morning bell at eight and the evening bell at five, the matriculates gathered for roll call and prayer.⁴⁶ Under the enthusiastic direction of Provost Smith, evening plays and concerts were presented there, with the assistance of such talented students as Francis Hopkinson—composer of America's first secular musical composition—Nathaniel Evans—a promising young poet, and Jacob Duché—later Chaplain of the Continental Congress.⁴⁷ On occasional Sunday evenings the auditorium resounded with the voices of ministerial scholars—among whom was William White, later the first Bishop of Pennsylvania—engaged in theological exercises.⁴⁸ Here were held the private and public examinations of the candidates for degrees. Here Dr. John Morgan, a member of the first College graduating class of 1757 and "Professor of the Theory and Practice of Physick" in the Medical School of the College, received in 1766 the Sargent Medal, given by a London merchant for the best essay "On the Reciprocal Advantages arising from a Perpetual Union between Great Britain and the American Colonies."⁴⁹

Although the ground floor was devoted consistently to classroom needs, the accumulation of library volumes and scientific equipment made it necessary in January 1762 for the trustees to designate a part of it as an "Apparatus Room." This was placed under the care of Professor John Ewing, lecturer in natural philosophy.⁵⁰ Here were arranged on shelves the books purchased by Peter Collinson—London agent of the Library Company—and by Provost Smith, and those donated by Franklin, Lewis Evans, and other contributors.⁵¹ Here, among other equipment, were carefully preserved Kinnersley's electrical apparatus loaned for lectures,⁵² the instruments for "Experimental Philosophy" purchased by Franklin in London,⁵³ and Thomas Penn's gifts to the College—a telescope and micrometer, "a pair of Adam's newly-invented Globes," and a "Chymical Apparatus of particular Value in the Tryal of Ores."⁵⁴ Later added to the room was the orrery, an intricate machine equipped to demonstrate the motion of the planets and their satellites, made for the College by David Rittenhouse in 1770.⁵⁵

³⁹ *Ibid.*, March 10, 1761.

⁴⁰ Gegenheimer, Albert F., *William Smith, educator and churchman*, 95-123, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1943.

⁴¹ Stowe, Walter H., *The life and letters of Bishop William White*, 21-23, N. Y., Morehouse, 1937.

⁴² Minutes of the Trustees, May 9, 20, 1766.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, January 12, 1762.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.* 1, rear pages.

⁴⁵ Smith, *op. cit.*, 126.

⁴⁶ Minutes of the Trustees, March 14, 1758.

⁴⁷ Thomas Penn to Richard Peters, April 5, 1766, Peters Papers 8, Hist. Soc. Pa.; Thomas Penn to Thomas Barton, September 27, 1765, Penn Papers 8; William Smith to Thomas Penn, June 8, 1769, Smith Papers, 3, Hist. Soc. Pa.

⁴⁸ William Smith to the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania, March 5, 1793, University of Pennsylvania Papers 2: 41, Univ. of Penna. Archives.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, March 7, 1772.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, November 10, 1750.

⁴¹ The deeds covering these purchases are preserved in the Archives of the University of Pennsylvania.

⁴² Academy Book of Accounts, Univ. of Penna. Archives.

⁴³ *Ibid.*; Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, June 5, 1753, Peters Papers 3, Hist. Soc. Pa.

⁴⁴ Smith, William, Account of the College and Academy of Philadelphia, *Discourses on public occasions in America*, 121, London, 1762.

⁴⁵ Minutes of the Trustees, May 11, 1756.



FIG. 4. Water color sketch of the Old Academy buildings and grounds. Original in the Edgar Fahs Smith Memorial Collection, University of Pennsylvania.

As the College and Academy developed, the need arose for another building to enable the institution to extend its activities. To meet the problem of suitable quarters for the many scholars from neighboring and distant colonies and the West Indies, the trustees proposed in 1761 that buildings be erected "to house students and put them upon a collegiate way of living as done at the Jersey and New York Colleges."⁵⁶ A secondary purpose was the housing of the Charity School, whose allotted room was coveted by the expanding upper classes.⁵⁷ Engaged to draw the plans, "House Carpenter" Smith suggested a dormitory of two "Wings," which would flank each side of the main Academy edifice.⁵⁸ Unable to provide funds for so large an undertaking, the trustees authorized Smith to begin construction in the summer of 1762 on "one half of the Buildings contained in the Plan."⁵⁹ The cost was placed at one thousand, five hundred pounds, a large part of which was raised through a public lottery—the seventh to be conducted for the benefit of the institution.⁶⁰ Situated to the north of the main building, in order "to keep clear the South Door" which served as the "common entry" of all the schools, the dormitory was completed in

1763.⁶¹ Student boarders were admitted in 1764 under the watchful eye of English Professor Kinnersley, who also served as steward.⁶² In preparation for its opening, Vice-Provost Alison and Kinnersley were sent to the College of New Jersey at Princeton to inspect Nassau Hall, and to study accommodations and the rates charged for board.⁶³

Three stories high, the new building measured approximately seventy feet in length and thirty feet in width along Fourth. DuSimitière's sketch shows it to have been of brick, with three chimneys, having a bull's eye window in the center of the triangular gabled end under the roof. Small doorways opened upon the College grounds, and multi-paned windows—unshuttered and evenly spaced—were the building's most conspicuous feature. The street floor contained two rooms for the use of the Charity School, and a kitchen and dining room. The two upper stories each contained eight rooms, where it was said that fifty students could be accommodated "without being more crowded than in the Jersey College."⁶⁴ The annual rental for each second story room was fixed at six pounds, and for each third story room at five pounds, producing "a clear Rent

⁵⁶ Minutes of the Trustees, March 10, 1761.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, September 8, 1761.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, November 28, 1761.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, April 14, September 8, 1761.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, April 14, 1761.

⁶² *Ibid.*, April 11, 1764.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*



FIG. 5. Corner of Fourth and Arch Streets about 1850-1860. Building on the left (S.W. corner) is probably the original house erected for Provost William Smith in 1771. Original photograph in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

of eighty-eight Pounds per annum.”⁶⁵ Unlike the main building, the dormitory possessed a cellar.⁶⁶

Determined that the new dwelling house meet its own operating expenses, the trustees appointed in 1764 a special committee, composed of Provost Smith and three trustees, to suggest the best method of administering the building.⁶⁷ Despite the execution of these proposals, the dormitory became a constant source of student complaint and financial loss. The trustees found it necessary to make regular visits of inspection, at which times the steward assured them that the chambers were kept tidy, and that Mrs. Kinnersley combed the smaller boys' heads “twice every week” and cared for their laundry.⁶⁸ Because many out-of-town students preferred the unbridled freedom of private boarding houses, the rooms were rarely full, and the rent paid by the scholars did not cover the costs of maintenance.⁶⁹ After Kinnersley resigned in 1772, the services of a capable steward were difficult to obtain.⁷⁰ James Ross, a tutor in the Latin School, accepted the onerous duties as “Keeper of the Accounts of the Lodgers,” but he relinquished his position on October 3, 1775.⁷¹ Meeting two weeks later, on October 17, the trustees agreed to lease the

building at moderate rent “to some creditable Family” who would board students at reasonable rates and accept the risk of collecting money from lodgers, with “no reduction of rent for deficiencies.”⁷² Accordingly, the dormitory was leased to a Mr. Webb, an unscrupulous individual whose padded accounts and unethical practices convinced the trustees that their tenant was attempting to escape payment of the rent.⁷³ It is probable that Webb abandoned the project in 1777. In the spring of 1779 the dormitory provided an annual income of only one hundred and twenty pounds.⁷⁴ This was an insignificant sum, particularly in view of the wartime inflation which had more than tripled faculty salaries, correspondingly raising the expenses of the institution.⁷⁵

Unlike the students, who had living facilities provided even if they did not use them, the faculty, with the exception of two or three tutors allowed to stay in the dormitory, had to find their own quarters. Particularly did Provost Smith regret the necessity, after nearly twenty years of teaching at the College, of making five or six daily trips by horseback between the campus and his home at the Falls of the Schuylkill. Early in 1774 he wrote to the trustees, stating the impossibility of raising on his present salary a family of seven children, and requesting that a house be built for him on the College grounds to lessen his expenses.⁷⁶ Promptly agreeing to erect a residence for him, the trustees approved three weeks later the plans drawn by Robert Smith. These provided for a three-story house, forty feet in length by thirty-four in width, having a one-story kitchen measuring twenty-one by eighteen feet.⁷⁷ Costing one thousand, six hundred and thirty-seven pounds,⁷⁸ the handsome brick structure was built on the southwest corner of Fourth and Arch Streets.⁷⁹ A plain cornice extended across the width of the house between the eaves and up to the apex of the gabled end of the building, forming a triangular pediment. The roof was wooden-shingled, with gutters and pipes of cedar.⁸⁰ In this simply-designed but commodious dwelling—the third building constructed upon the colonial campus on Fourth Street—William Smith and his family took up residence shortly before the Revolution.

No discussion of the colonial buildings would be com-

⁷² *Ibid.*, October 17, 1775.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, May 31, 1777.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, March 16, 1779.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, March 1, 1779.

⁷⁶ William Smith to the Trustees, February 1774, Univ. of Penna. General Archives.

⁷⁷ Minutes of the Trustees, March 15, 1774.

⁷⁸ Original estimate, Univ. of Penna. Archives.

⁷⁹ Two buildings have been erroneously designated as the original Provost's House. One was situated on the northeast corner of Fourth and Arch, across the street from the campus, on property never owned by the College. The other, standing today on the southwest corner—the site of the original building—mistakenly was thought to be a colonial structure possibly remodeled along Victorian lines.

⁸⁰ Minutes of the Trustees, March 15, 1774.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ Survey of the dormitory made on December 3, 1765, by a representative of the Philadelphia Contributionship for Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire.

⁶⁷ Minutes of the Trustees, June 14, 1764.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, October 17, December 15, 1767.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, October 17, 1775.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, October 15, 1772.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, October 3, 1775.

plete without mention of the Medical School. In 1762, twelve years after the founding of the Academy, unique instruction was initiated by young William Shippen, junior, a recent and enthusiastic graduate of the University of Edinburgh, in an out-building of his father's house located on the corner of Fourth and Prune—now Locust—Streets [C, V]. To these lectures—the first formal discourses on anatomy delivered in the colonies—he welcomed Philadelphia students. In 1765 the College of Philadelphia established the first American school of medicine, with John Morgan and Shippen as professors, and thus became the earliest university in the American colonies.⁸¹ While it is probable that medical instruction was not given in the buildings on Fourth Street, it is known that medical students attended some of the Provost's classes in science.⁸² However, the first site recorded as housing the Medical School was obtained by the University in 1785, and turned over to the Medical School in 1792.⁸³

With the coming of the Revolution, numerous individuals connected with the College, Academy, and Charitable School as students, faculty and even trustees actively joined the American cause. The provincial convention called in Philadelphia in 1774 was presided over by trustee Thomas Willing, while former tutor Charles Thomson—later secretary of the Continental Congress—acted as its recorder. Joseph Reed, recipient of an honorary master's degree in 1766, was elected president of the Executive Council of Pennsylvania. James Cannon, class of '67 and since 1773 Professor of English and Mathematics, helped to draft the commonwealth's new constitution as a member of the provincial convention of 1776. Four graduates—Francis Hopkinson, James Latta, Hugh Williamson, and William Paca—signed the Declaration of Independence. General Thomas Mifflin, class of '60, was elected Governor of Pennsylvania. A great number of students served as soldiers, one of the most famous of whom was General Anthony Wayne. John Morgan abandoned his medical classes in 1775 to serve as Surgeon General of the Continental Army, and was joined by his colleagues William Shippen in 1776 and Benjamin Rush in 1777.

But the conspicuous services of its associates in the American interest did not afford protection to the College, whose property was usurped by irresponsible groups of colonists. Alarmed by the destruction to the buildings and grounds, the faculty appealed to the Committee of Safety. In their petition, dated January 23, 1777, the professors protested the breaking open of school and dormitory rooms by armed men, the forcing of the girls' Charity School mistress from her quarters, the burning of the school wood supply, the quartering of hundreds of soldiers upon the grounds, and the

crowding of the yard with wagons and horses.⁸⁴ By June 1777 operation of the schools was impossible, and classes were suspended.⁸⁵ In September the British Army entered the city.

Not until September 1778 was instruction resumed and "the collegiate way of living" again undertaken in the dormitory, although the great hall of the College had been used by the Continental Congress upon its return to Philadelphia three months earlier in June.⁸⁶ But the institution was now under extremist attack for alleged Tory sympathies, and the Pennsylvania legislature initiated an investigation of the College which lasted nine months.⁸⁷ Finally, on November 29, 1779, the charters of the College and Academy were revoked, and the institution was re-established in the hands of new trustees as the University of the State of Pennsylvania.⁸⁸ With this action, the colonial era of the campus came to an end.

But the story of the early buildings is not complete without an account of their later history and eventual disposition. For the next decade classes were held in the College edifice under the auspices of the new University. In 1789, however, a more conservative legislature returned to the College and Academy the privileges guaranteed by the original charters of 1753 and 1755. There were now two institutions, the College and the University. While the College repossessed its buildings under the leadership of Provost Smith, the University found quarters in the structure erected by the American Philosophical Society at Fifth Street near Chestnut. Plagued by grave financial and administrative problems, however, the two institutions were joined amicably as the University of Pennsylvania in September 1791.⁸⁹ The buildings at Fourth and Arch now housed the University of Pennsylvania.

During the next decade, however, a series of changing conditions caused the University authorities to seek the disposal of their colonial property. In 1794 the trustees authorized at great expense the partial renovation of the College building, which had served two generations of schoolboys almost without interruption.⁹⁰ But the fifty-four year old structure—allowed to deteriorate during and after the war—now required constant repair, draining the meager funds of the institution. The dormitory, probably no longer used by student lodgers, housed the Charity School and the family of Latin Professor John

⁸⁴ Letter to the Honorable Council of Safety: Application of the Faculty and Masters in behalf of the College, Academy and Charitable School, Philadelphia, January 23, 1777. Univ. of Penna. General Archives.

⁸⁵ Minutes of the Trustees, June 23, 1777. The trustees did not meet again until September 27, 1778.

⁸⁶ Letter from Josiah Bartlett, Delegate to Congress from New Hampshire, July 13, 1778. *Pa. Mag. Hist. Biog.* 22: 114, 1898.

⁸⁷ Minutes of the Trustees, March 1, 16; July 5; September 28, October 4, 1779.

⁸⁸ Cheyney, *op. cit.*, 122.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 62-65.

⁹⁰ Minutes of the Trustees, July 1, 17, 1794.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, April 16, 1765.

⁸² *Ibid.*, March 16, 1779.

⁸³ Old Survey of University property, 1818, compiled by The Philadelphia Contributionship.

Andrews.⁹¹ The Provost's House, occupied by Provost John Ewing, was in deplorable condition, becoming the subject of frequent letters to the trustees from its tenant, who complained that every rain further destroyed the walls, ceiling, and floors of part of the edifice.⁹² In a vain attempt to meet the upkeep of these buildings, and to pay the salaries of the faculty, the trustees in 1795 sold several lots on the periphery of the campus.⁹³ But the increasing commercialism of the neighborhood and the expansion of the University classes indicated that the buildings at Fourth and Arch were no longer suited to the needs of the institution. In 1800 the University obtained new quarters, purchasing at auction the mansion built for George Washington when it was thought that Philadelphia would remain the nation's capital. This building, located on Ninth Street between Market and Chestnut, was procured for forty-two thousand dollars, less than half the cost of construction.⁹⁴ To secure immediate funds for this transaction, it became imperative to dispose of the grounds on Fourth Street.

This program was hindered, however, when the trustees found themselves legally bound to continue the obligations of the deed of 1740, which their colonial predecessors had assumed when obtaining the Whitefield property in 1749. In 1802 the trustees addressed the Pennsylvania legislature, requesting release from the original covenant that a charity school and a room for preaching be maintained on the property.⁹⁵ But this petition—as well as another in 1813—was refused.⁹⁶ Accordingly, only the University and the Academy were moved to the new building on Ninth Street in March 1802, while the charity classes remained in the old dormitory.⁹⁷

A means of disposing of a part of the old College building was evolved in April 1802, when half of the structure was sold for nine thousand dollars to the congregation of the Union Methodist Church for a meeting house.⁹⁸ In the half of the building retained by the trustees, the ground floor was rented to private schoolmasters for three hundred dollars a year, while the upper story was reserved for the use of itinerant ministers.⁹⁹ In 1803 the trustees accepted an offer for the Provost's House, which passed into the hands of Thomas

Armit for nine thousand dollars.¹⁰⁰ After the sale of the surrounding lots, all of the colonial property that remained in the possession of the University was half of the College edifice and the dormitory.

The later history of these buildings covers most of the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1813 after the expiration of the lease to the schoolmasters, the Academy classes were returned to the old College because of the crowded conditions at Ninth Street.¹⁰¹ Later the administration of the Academy evidently was relinquished to individual teachers, the most favored of whom was S. W. Crawford, who occupied some of the rooms from the early 1820's until 1844.¹⁰² In that year the building was demolished. Saddled to the land by legal verdict, the authorities ordered in 1844 the construction of a new schoolhouse for the Academy—where space was reserved for religious worship—at the rear of the old lot, while two stores were built for investment purposes at the street line.¹⁰³ The portion of the College building owned by the Union Methodists already had been torn down in 1833, and replaced by a new church.¹⁰⁴ The dormitory, evidently still housing the charity classes, was razed in 1845—marking the final demise of the colonial buildings. On its site were constructed two stores, and a three-story schoolhouse to serve the Charity School.¹⁰⁵

Until 1875 the two nineteenth-century school buildings on Fourth Street housed the successors to the Academy and Charitable School of Philadelphia. The College, now a University expanding in a manner undreamed by its first Provost, had moved across the Schuylkill to its present location at Thirty-Fourth Street and Woodland Avenue. In 1877 when free primary education was becoming universal and the need for charity instruction was disappearing, the terms of the charter again were examined. After a judiciary committee of the trustees advised that the colonial property might be abandoned on condition that scholarships be given to poor boys, the last buildings at Fourth Street were sold.¹⁰⁶ For the twentieth-century passerby, the location of the College, Academy and Charitable School is marked by a bronze tablet, reminding him that this land is a venerated site in the annals of the University of Pennsylvania.

⁹¹ List of Estates and Property of the University of Pennsylvania, March 1, 1801 4: 51, Univ. of Penna. General Archives.

⁹² Minutes of the Trustees, April 1, 1801.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, April 21, December 11, 1795; February 2, 1796.

⁹⁴ Cheyney, *op. cit.*, 181.

⁹⁵ Petition of the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania to the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, January 12, 1802. University of Penna. General Archives.

⁹⁶ Stauffer-Wescott Papers 32: 2511, Hist. Soc. Pa.

⁹⁷ Minutes of the Trustees, April 6, 1802. Report of the Committee on the President's House and for the Sale of the Buildings on Fourth Street, XIII, 13, Univ. of Penna. General Archives.

⁹⁸ Minutes of the Trustees, April 6, 1802.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, April 8, 1803.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, January 5, 1808. Stauffer-Wescott Papers 32: 2511, Hist. Soc. Pa.

¹⁰² John Hamer to the Trustees, January 14, 1825, and S. W. Crawford to Mr. Emlin, December 8, 1842. Univ. of Penna. Archives General.

¹⁰³ Contract dated July 20, 1844, Univ. of Penna. Archives General. Resolution of the Trustees' Committee on the Fourth Street Buildings and Grounds, May 29, 1844, Meredith Papers, Hist. Soc. Pa.

¹⁰⁴ Minutes of the Trustees of the Union Methodist Church, February 3, 1833, Methodist Historical Society, Philadelphia.

¹⁰⁵ Report of the Committee on Expenditures, February 4, 1845. Indenture dated July 1845. Univ. of Penna. Archives General.

¹⁰⁶ Cheyney, *op. cit.*, 303 f.

CHRIST CHURCH, ST. PETER'S, AND ST. PAUL'S

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AN unobtrusive clause in the Quaker charter, muddy streets in the Quaker City, and a family spat blamed on Quakers, led to founding the oldest Anglican churches in Philadelphia: Christ (1695), St. Peter's (1757), and St. Paul's (1760).

According to Article XXII of Penn's charter (granted by Charles II in 1681), the Bishop of London could send an Anglican "preacher" to the province whenever twenty inhabitants expressed the desire for one.¹ In November of 1695 (we are told), this proviso was acted on by thirty-six laymen, so Henry Compton, Bishop of London, sent the Rev. Thomas Clayton to take charge of this congregation. Primitive streets, rendered even worse by inclement weather, prevented many people from making the trip to Christ Church; to accommodate them, St. Peter's was built as a chapel of the former. An all-too fiery preacher, denounced by the Provost of the College as a tool of the Quakers, led his cohorts right out of Christ Church to found their own parish of St. Paul's.

Of the three, Christ Church is by far the most important; it is easily one of the most important churches in the entire nation. St. Peter's runs a respectable second, and St. Paul's comes third, but it must also be remembered that far less is known about St. Paul's than about the others. Christ and St. Peter's are still active parish churches, while St. Paul's building is used today as the headquarters for a diocesan philanthropic agency.² Despite differences between these churches in either the past or the present, they all share in national significance when one realizes that in all likelihood approximately two-thirds of the signers of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States were Episcopalians.³

CHRIST CHURCH, 1695-1760

Murkiness shrouds the early history of Christ Church, and considerable research must yet be done to bring that story to light. But our known information is sufficient to give the following account.

A 1702 supplement to the deed for property on Second Street above Market, where Christ Church stands [E, II], stipulates that "the Church and other premises are to be perpetually appropriated . . . for the publick wor-

ship of God . . . as . . . professed in the Church of England . . . and to noe other use or uses whatsoever."⁴ Here a small church was erected⁵ in 1695, but was replaced by the present famous building, begun in 1727 and "happily finished"—apparently with a last spurt of effort⁶—in 1744. This beautiful structure is a red brick building with white trim in the Georgian spirit. In colonial days this was a colossal edifice—certainly one of the largest in North America—whose two hundred foot tower and steeple dwarfed the rest of Philadelphia. The church is one hundred and eighteen feet long, sixty-one feet wide, has two stories of round-arched windows, a balustrade ornamented with urns around the peaked roof, and a tall spire on the west end crowned with a golden miter. This miter, two and a half feet high, is engraved with thirteen stars for the original states and an inscription reading: "The Rt. Rev. William White, D.D., consecrated Bishop of the Episcopal Church of Pennsylvania, February 4th, 1787."⁷

Clearly, Christ Church is significant as an outstanding example of colonial architecture (fig. 1). But it is also important in national and ecclesiastical history. Parish records abound in the names of people close to American Independence: Franklin, Morris, Washington, and Gen. Charles Lee, to be sure; the family Stow, one of whom helped recast the Liberty Bell; Philip Syng, whose silver inkstand—undoubtedly used in signing the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution—is displayed in Independence Hall today; Plunket Fleeson, the craftsman who made furnishings for Independence Hall; and John Nixon who first read the Declaration to the public—to mention but a few.⁸ In July, 1775, the Continental Congress worshipped as a body in Christ Church; several years later a pew, set aside for presidential occupancy, was utilized by Washington and his family. Seven signers of the Declaration lie buried in Christ Church grounds today, the largest number to be found

⁴ The original deed, 15 November 1695, is from Griffith Jones to Joshua Carpenter; the supplement, "To all Christian People," is dated 20 July 1702. Both these parchment documents are in the basement vault of Washburn House, to the west of Christ Church.

⁵ Practically nothing is known of this church; it is mentioned in a letter dated "Philadelphia, January 18, 1696⁷" from Colonel Quarry and thirty-five others to Governor Nicholson. The letter is printed in Perry, William S., *Historical collections relating to the American colonial Church* 2: 5-6, Hartford (Conn.), The Church Press, 1871.

⁶ See p. 189; see also note 25.

⁷ How accurate this citation is, the author does not know; it turns up with variations in capitalization, abbreviation, &c.

⁸ In the Ms. records of Christ Church, these names (and other famous ones) crop up every now and then in lists of subscribers, pew holders, and the like.

¹ For a copy of the text of this Charter, see Hazard, Samuel, *Annals of Pennsylvania* . . . , 488-499, Phila., Hazard and Mitchell, 1850.

² The Philadelphia Protestant Episcopal City Mission.

³ Perry, William S., *The faith of the signers of the declaration of independence*, ed. by William Abbatt, Tarrytown (N. Y.), Abbatt, 1926. For the Constitution, see: Bratenahl, G. C. F., ed., *Handbook of Washington Cathedral*, 93, Washington, [n.p.], 1911.



Fig. 1. Christ Church as painted by William Strickland in 1811. Although the surroundings today are quite different, the church looks practically the same. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

anywhere: Benjamin Franklin, Robert Morris, James Wilson, Benjamin Rush, Francis Hopkinson, Joseph Hewes, and George Ross. The first Bishop of Pennsylvania, the Rt. Rev. William White, was rector of this parish, famed as the assembly place for the General Convention of 1789. This meeting adopted a constitution, canons, and Prayer Book, thereby establishing the American Episcopal Church as an independent body politic within the Anglican Communion.

Of the early events at Christ Church, the most significant one occurred around 1696; in that year, largely through the efforts of the missionary Thomas Bray, possibly the first library in Pennsylvania was established at Christ Church. This library had been requested as early as 18 January 1696/7 when Col. Robert Quarry wrote Gov. Nicholson: "We hope your Excellency will also mind his Grace [the Archbishop of Canterbury], of Plate for the communion Table and a Library."⁹ Of more than one thousand volumes and folios—mainly theological and some printed in the 1500's—a great number was given by Queen Anne.¹⁰ This library has been added to during the centuries and is still used today. It is interesting to note that the man chiefly responsible for building the present edifice, Dr. John Kearsley, was one of the three superintendents (two, at least, of whom were members of Christ Church)¹¹

⁹ Quarry to Nicholson, in Perry, *op. cit.* 2: 6.

¹⁰ Dorr, Benjamin, *A historical account of Christ Church, Philadelphia* . . . 333, N. Y., Swords, Stanford, and Co., 1847.

¹¹ John Kearsley, Thomas Lawrence, and Andrew Hamilton, in 1729, were appointed to superintend the building of the State House. (See: *Penna. Archives*, Eighth Series, 3: 2154, 2213.) Kearsley and Lawrence were members of Christ Church and, at

charged with building the State House (later called Independence Hall). Just who designed Christ Church is not known to the present writer; some people say John Porteus, though most say John Kearsley. At Kearsley's death (January, 1772), the *Pennsylvania Packet* said, "He was well acquainted with the principles of architecture, a monument of which we have in *Christ Church*, a building [which] (in the opinion of strangers) in point of elegance and taste, surpasses everything of the kind in America."¹² And shortly thereafter, the vestry referred to him only as "an ancient, worthy and useful Member,"¹³ saying nothing about his being the "designer." On the other hand, evidence for the case of Porteus or any other person has not come to the author's attention.

By 1725, the small building known as Christ Church "is become ruinous and must shortly be rebuilt."¹⁴ The church had prospered, though, and by July, 1726, consisted "of above 800 Communicants."¹⁵ Such a number of people, albeit probably never in church at the same time, was still too great for the small building "altho' there has been two Isles added to it since it was first built & . . . were it rebuilt, & made larger the number of Communicants would very much encrease."¹⁶ So in April, 1727, work was begun on enlarging the old building;¹⁷ this consisted of erecting an addition thirty-three feet long to the west end¹⁸ and took about four years to accomplish.¹⁹ Possibly work on the eastern end was finished by 1735.²⁰ From 1732 till 1740, the church officials experimented with many positions for the pulpit in an effort to provide more seating space (and, to a great extent, for the Governor's convenience),²¹ till it was finally established at the east end of the nave²² where it remained for a long time.

various times, church wardens. (See: Dorr, *op. cit.*, 294 ff., for a list of churchwardens.) Hamilton's connection with Christ Church is not clear. At least he (along with other members of his family) is buried there, and his funeral service was conducted in November, 1784, by the Rev. Dr. White. (See: Parsons, J. C., *Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer* . . . , 70, Phila., Fell, 1893.) Probably Hamilton was a Churchman and thus, perhaps, a member of Christ Church (at all events, an indifferent one) who ". . . came to [Christ] Church to hear [a particular] Sermon [in August, 1738], tho' he had not been there in ten years." (P[eter] E[vans] to Dr. Thomas Moore, in Perry, *op. cit.* 2: 530.)

¹² *Pennsylvania Packet*, 13 January 1772.

¹³ Vestry minutes 1761-1784: 227.

¹⁴ Letter of Peter Evans to the Lord Bishop of London; quoted in Perry, *op. cit.* 2: 139-142.

¹⁵ Letter of P[atrick] Gordon to the Lord Bishop of London, 19 July 1726, in *ibid.*, 149-150.

¹⁶ *Loc. cit.*

¹⁷ Vestry minutes 1717-1760: 60-61.

¹⁸ *Loc. cit.* For more information on this point, *vide infra* p. 190, Kearsley's note of 17 December 1760.

¹⁹ Vestry minutes 1717-1760: 75-76 *passim*.

²⁰ More research is necessary to establish this point; the statement in the text is based on rather vague implications in *ibid.*, 80-83.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 76-79, *passim*.

²² *Ibid.*, 89.

A résumé of the progress made in building Christ Church and its status by May, 1739, is presented in the preamble to a subscription book of that date, viz:

Whereas, the Episcopal Church of Philadelphia, having been long built [i.e., the original small church], and much out of Repair, as well as too small, for the convenient Seating of the Congregation, It was therefore Resolved, by two several [*sic*] Vestrys, in the Year Seventeen hundred twenty Seven, that a sum of money, should be raised by Subscription, for erecting a new, more large, & comodious Building wch goode design, wth much care and industry, hath been carried on, the foundation of a Steeple laid, & the Body of the new Church, on the outside almost finished, But the Said Subscription falling short, & insufficient to compleat the same, the inside of the Church remains unfinished, & many of the Congregation yet unprovided for, with Pews, for themselves & Familiys, wch makes it necessary, that some Pews, A Gallery, and other conveniences, should yet be added, as well as the whole finished, for wch Pious & good Purpose, [we promise to pay the amounts stated after our names.]²³

Further important work was undertaken in April, 1743. The congregation had grown to the extent that they could no longer be adequately accommodated; consequently, the vestry ordered "the west End Gallerie be . . . run out, and Built entirely over the west isle."²⁴ Prior to this time, work on the church "hath been at a Stand, nothing but an outside shell, for many Years, and [the congregation] are now Proceeding upon it with great alacrity and Generosity."²⁵ By April, 1744, "The Churchwardens report[ed] that the Church [was] now happily Finished."²⁶ Not quite finished, really, because in November of that same year, a beautiful chandelier was added to the church. This chandelier of twenty-four branches, brought from London,²⁷ is quite likely the one that still hangs in the center of the church.

As we saw above, the foundation for the steeple had been laid by 1739; steps were taken to complete this structure by opening a subscription for that purpose in March, 1750. The preamble to this list informs us:

Whereas many well disposed Individuals of this City have declared their Desire that there might be a fit & comodious Steeple built upon the Foundation already laid some Years ago by the Care and Pious Benevolence of the Church at that time, and that a Sett of Bells may be provided to be placed therein, which Work will be an Ornament as well as a Credit to this City

Therefore in Order to defray the Charge of Building said Steeple and purchasing Bells [this subscription is opened.]²⁸

²³ Unmarked Ms. Subscription Book, dated 7 May 1739. This item is in the Christ Church Ms. collection, drawer 19. For many years these Mss. (in twenty-six drawers) were housed in a vault in the tower of the church; they have recently been transferred to the basement vault of Washburn House just to the west of the church. Articles in this collection will hereafter be cited as being in "CChMss, drawer so-and-so."

²⁴ Vestry minutes, 1717-1760: 102.

²⁵ The Rev. Robert Jenney to the Bishop of London, 24 June 1743, in Perry *op. cit.* 2: 234.

²⁶ Vestry minutes, 1717-1760: 107.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 109.

²⁸ Unmarked Ms. Subscription Book, dated 18 Mar. 1750. CChMss., drawer 19.

And for this purpose, "The Honourable the Governor" led the subscription list with a pledge of £50. Benjamin Franklin came up with only £10, and John Nixon offered £2-17-6.²⁹ The steeple was subsequently built by the famous Philadelphia carpenter, Robert Smith.³⁰ Positive steps to procure the bells (and even a clock which, so far as we know, was never obtained) were inaugurated in 1753.³¹ So after subscriptions, lotteries (wherein Franklin had a leading hand),³² and tribulations, the bells came from England, were finally hung (in 1754),³³ and the steeple finished at the great cost of £3219-9-8.³⁴

This set of bells is very famous, having been made by the same craftsmen who manufactured the Liberty Bell just a couple of years earlier, Thomas Lester and Thomas Pack of the Whitechapel foundry in London.³⁵ Tradition says the bells were brought to America on the ship *Myrtilla*, Captain Budden, at no charge; out of gratitude for this service, the church rang its bells each time Budden's ship reached Philadelphia. For almost a century this was the city's only set of bells capable of playing music, and even now they ring out hymns daily at noon—long after the Liberty Bell has passed into silence. Throughout their long lives, the Christ Church bells have been busy ringing on many public occasions. As a matter of fact, requests for their service in this capacity became so numerous that the vestry in 1795 passed a resolution stating that the bells would be rung only at the request of the President of the United States, the Governor of Pennsylvania, or the Mayor of Philadelphia.³⁶

Back in 1783, the traveler Johann D. Schöpf described the bells thus:

Christ Church has a beautiful chime of bells, which makes a complete octave and is heard especially on evenings before the weekly markets and at times of other glad public events. The bells are so played that the eight single notes of the octave are several times struck, descending, rapidly one after the other,—and then the accord follows in tercet and quint, ascending; and so repeated. On certain solemn days, there is repetition to the 13th time, that sacred number. At Philadelphia there is always something to be chimed, so that it seems almost as if it was an Imperial or Popish city. . . .³⁷

²⁹ *Loc. cit.*

³⁰ Vestry minutes, 1767-1784: 273.

³¹ Vestry minutes, 1717-1760: 140.

³² *Ibid.*, 139.

³³ A bill for hanging the bells, amounting to £40, was paid on 6 December 1754. Steeple Account 1751-1755, CChMss., drawer 26. An undated subscription sheet (probably of the 1750's) indicates that the amount raised for hanging bells was £240-12-19. CChMss., drawer 19.

³⁴ Steeple Account 1754; Steeple Account 1755. CChMss., drawer 26.

³⁵ Dorr, *op. cit.*, 330, cites the cast lettering on the bells; the present author has not inspected them.

³⁶ Vestry minutes 1784-1815: 87, the entry is dated 13 April 1795.

³⁷ Schoepf, Johann D., *Travels in the Confederation . . .*, tr. and ed. by Alfred J. Morrison . . . 1: 68-69, Phila., W. J. Campbell, 1911.



FIG. 2. St. Peter's Church. The tower and steeple date from 1842; as originally built, St. Peter's had only a small cupola on the west end. Photograph by the late Philip Wallace. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

Just a few years after the bells were hung, Dr. John Kearsley gave to Evan Morgan an account³⁸ of the building of Christ Church. Despite its rather cumbersome form, this note is revealing:

according to your request I send you the whole amount of Rebuilding Christ Church [i.e., of erecting the present structure]. I mean the Cost which you'll find was £3010; in Which is the Expense of Building the House which lately is Repaired and also the Foundation of the Steeple, the Wall cost above £60—notwithstanding I had it Laid for only 2/6 the perch, the foundn of the steeple not much Less So that the whole Expense in Building the Church was not £3000.

[On a second sheet Kearsley continues:]

At your request I herein send you the whole amount of the Expense in Rebuilding and Finishing Christ Church as it now stands viz The Expense in Laying the Foundation of the Church and Steeple from its Westernmost Boundries to the Second Column Eastward, Containing 2 windows and a Large Door on Each Side with the windows at the End, including the Key Stones, Imposts, window Stools, & Proper Ornaments, with the west Gallery and north & south Galleries Extending from the Said west Gallery Eastward to the aforesd Second Column wth Proper Seats & Pulpit within that Space made of old Stuff and Rough 1/2 faced Boards for Present use, the amount Examd and Reported to

³⁸ John Kearsley to Evan Morgan, 17 Dec. 1760. CChMss., drawer 11.

the Vestry anno 1734 by Antho Palmer, Isaacs Binghorn, & Jos Maddox was £958-8-6.

The amount of the Expenses in Rebuilding & Carrying on the Body and East End of the Said Church the whole Examd and Reported to the Vestry By Jos Madox, Thos Leech & [illegible] Hooock [?] £1229-6-9

The amount of Expense in Finishing the Inside, Containing the Gallerys Fluted Columns arches wth the architraves in the Body of the Ch the Seats, as also the ornaments in the Chancell also the Balustrade on the outside of the Church. With the 2 Stair Cases &c to Compleat finishing the whole—Examined approved [&c] £822-14-9

Total Cost in Rebuilding Ch Church	£3010-10-0
[Add steeple expences from p. 189]	[3219 -9-8]
[Grand total]	[£6229-19-8]

ST. PETER'S, ST. PAUL'S

As the Christ Church building was growing, so was the number of members; growing, actually, too rapidly for tranquility, and it was necessary to build a new church, subsequently to be called St. Peter's (fig. 2). In March, 1753, the Rev. Dr. Jenney of Christ Church noted the building was so filled that "many Persons are obliged to stay at home and neglect divine Service, or go into dissenting Meetings."³⁹ The calamity of staying at home could be outdone only by the sin of becoming a sectary! Another reason ascribed for the necessity of building a new church was the deplorable condition of the streets in the early 1700's which hindered people in making the trip to Christ Church;⁴⁰ and we have record of the jibe that the city, instead of being called "Philadelphia," should have been called "Filthy-dirty."⁴¹ In any event, the reverend doctor started a subscription for the new church to be built in the southern corner of town—all of six blocks away.

Land for the new "chapel of ease"⁴² at Third and Pine [D, VI] was given in 1757 by the proprietaries, Thomas and Richard Penn,⁴³ no longer Quakers but Churchmen. Robert Smith, the famous carpenter, contracted to build this edifice according to terms in an agreement of 5 August 1758. Though laden with the prolixity of legality, this contract is also made long by the very complete (for those days) architectural specifications of the proposed building. For physical history, some of this document (fig. 3) is worth citing:

That he the said Robert Smith shall . . . with all Convenient Speed Erect Build and in a Workman like manner . . . a Church or House for the Worship of Almighty God According to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England of the Dimensions . . . following . . . Length of Ninety feet above the Base or Water Table and of the

³⁹ The Rev. Dr. Jenney to subscribers for erecting a new church, 21 March 1753. CChMss., drawer 11.

⁴⁰ Watson, John F., *Annals of Philadelphia* . . . 3: 92, Phila., Stuart, 1905.

⁴¹ *Ibid.* 1: 101.

⁴² The Rev. Dr. Jenney to subscribers for erecting a new church, 21 March 1753. CChMss., drawer 11.

⁴³ Jeffreys, C. P. B., *The provincial and revolutionary history of St. Peter's Church, Philadelphia, 1753-1783, Pa. Mag. of Hist. and Biog.* 47: 342-344, 1923.

Articles of Agreement Indented, had made, Concluded and fully agreed, upon by and between John Hearsley Eben Morgan Jacob Duchee James Child Redmond Conyngham Alexander Hedman Alwood Thale Samuel M. East junr John Willcocks^{proprietors} and William Plumsted of the City of Philadelphia Gentlemen a Committee of the Vestrey of Christ Church in the said City of the one part and Robert Smith of the same City House Carpenter of the other part in manner and form following that is to say, First the said Robert Smith in Consideration of the Covenants Promises payments and Agreements herein after mentioned on the part of the said Robert Smith to be performed made full paid and kept for himself his Heirs Executors and Administrators doth Covenant promise and Agree to and with the said John Hearsley Eben Morgan Jacob Duchee James Child Redmond Conyngham Alexander Hedman Alwood Thale Samuel M. East junr John Willcocks^{proprietors} and William Plumsted and each of them there and each of their Heirs Executors and Administrators that he the said Robert Smith shall and will with all convenient Speed Erect Build and in a Workman like manner Substantially Build or Cause to be built on the East End of a certain Lot of Land lately given for that purpose by the Honble the Proprietories in the said City bounded on Pine Street and Third Street of the said City, a Church or House for the Worship of Almighty God according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England of the Dimensions and form following

FIG. 3. First page of the articles of agreement for building St. Peter's. This three-page document is in the Christ Church manuscript collection.

Breadth of Sixty feet above the Base also . . . That the Walls above the said Foundation shall be thirty Seven feet high and Composed of good Merchantable Bricks and Mortar . . . and Gable Ends or Walls in the Pedements. . . . That there shall be Rustick Work on each Cornor of the said Building. . . . That there shall be in the South and North sides of the said Building two Doors Twelve feet high and five feet wide . . . and large Circular headed Windows . . . in the Second Story . . . the said Smith shall find and provide good English Glass for the . . . Sashes of Ten by fourteen Inches. . . . That in the East End . . . there shall be two large Circular headed windows . . . in the first Story . . . [and] two smaller Circular headed Windows . . . in the Second Story with one Round Window in the Pedement, That in the West End . . . there shall be Three large Circular headed Windows . . . in the first Story and three smaller Circular headed Windows . . . in the Second Story That there shall be a Cupola Erected . . . on the West End . . . of Ten feet Diamtor and at least Thirty two feet high from the Top of the Roof to the Top of the Vane . . . Composed of Copper and to be neatly Gilt That there shall a large Modillion Cornice to the Eves and round the said Building and five large Urns properly placed & fixed at the Corners & tops of one Pedement at the Ends of the sd Building . . . a Circular Ceiling shall be made and fixed under the Roof ready for the Plaistorer to lath and plaister on together with a large Cornice under the Spring of the Arch for the Circular Ceiling . . . the whole outside work aforesd to be painted and well finished with three different Coats of paint of a good stone Colour . . . and if That the said Robert Smith . . . [shall have the job done by 1 November 1759, he will be paid] the Justly full Sum

of Two Thousand three Hundred and Ten pounds lawful money of Pennsylvania. . . .⁴⁴

In a sedate and orderly manner St. Peter's was in the building, but this tranquility was tottered by the ranting Rev. William McClenachan who stormed out (with a bit of parochial nudging) of Christ Church, taking Churchmen with him and attracting Dissenters, to found St. Paul's in June, 1760.⁴⁵

William McClenachan, originally a Presbyterian minister, joined the Church of England and was subsequently ordained to the diaconate and the priesthood, 1755, in London.⁴⁶ On traveling through Philadelphia, he preached at Christ Church with such effect that many asked him, in 1759, to stay as an assistant.⁴⁷ His preaching, though, was of "railings and revilings in the Pulpit," and his "Extemporaneous Praying & Preaching" not "agreeable to the canons," according to Robert Jenney, the rector.⁴⁸ McClenachan again offended the clergy at a convention in April, 1760, so that by June he

⁴⁴ Robert Smith's agreement for building St. Peter's, 5 August 1758. CChMss., drawer 26. The almost constant use of three, instead of four, elipsis points in the text is not an error; the original is practically devoid of periods!

⁴⁵ Barratt, Norris S., *Outline of the history of old St. Paul's church* . . . , 28 [Phila.], Colonial Society of Penna., 1917.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁴⁸ In Perry, *op. cit.* 2: 309.



FIG. 4. St. Paul's Church, now the headquarters of a diocesan philanthropic agency. The flight of steps leading to the entrance shows how high the main floor is today. The side entrance (vestibule at the right, behind the wall) leads to the basement level which was possibly that of the original church before the alterations of 1830. Courtesy of The Philadelphia Protestant Episcopal City Mission.

withdrew to start his own parish.⁴⁹ Regarding this event, that famed Provost of the College of Philadelphia (now the University of Pennsylvania) the Rev. William Smith, D.D., wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury, "The number that followed Mr. MacClenaghan from our Church to his Conventicle are but inconsiderable: & as they were the tools of the Quaker Party to distract and divide we think such a purgation a happy incident."⁵⁰ Tools or no tools, it was necessary in 1761 to make a new seating plan for Christ Church "in the Vacancies made by McClenachan's Separation & the building [of] St. Peter's."⁵¹

Land for St. Paul's on the east side of Third below Walnut [E, V] came from various sources, but not till 1796 did it come into the possession of the corporation of St. Paul's;⁵² funds for erecting the building were derived from lotteries⁵³ authorized in the first two months of 1765.

At the present time, very little is known to this writer of the physical history of St. Paul's (fig. 4). No longer a parish, St. Paul's building today is the headquarters of the Church City Mission. It is a very high, two-story, plain, brick building (with a blotched cement finish on

the sides), a peaked roof and no tower, its entrance now in Greek revival style—the whole affair looking nothing like a church. The building was remodeled to the extent of \$10,000 in 1830 by the famous architect, William Strickland;⁵⁴ some impression of this work may be gleaned from both a contemporary newspaper description and an insurance survey:

... St. Paul's Church may now vie, in point of beauty, (with extreme neatness combined) with any church in the city. The pulpit decorations reflect the highest credit on the Messrs. Hancocks, gentlemen who have recently established an Upholstery "Furnishing Store," at the S W Corner of 3rd and Walnut streets. We looked in yesterday at St. Paul's, and think our correspondent has done less than justice to the taste of the Messrs. Hancocks who decorated the pulpit, and furnished the pews. . . . We may remark that the alteration in the church has added a large number of pews; and produced in the basement story, a vestry room, a lecture room, and a Sunday school room. The whole, with all the decorations, was effected at an expense of about \$11,000.⁵⁵

A quite good insurance survey of St. Paul's, made in February, 1831, describes it as a two story building with "First or Basement Story, in 3 Rooms," much as it is today. "Second Story, is the Church. . . . Along 2 Sides & one End Are Galleries."⁵⁶

The ground level, although broken up with rooms now, contains flat gravestones whose arrangement indicates the layout of a church floor. These tombstones mark the resting places of successive rectors,⁵⁷ followed by a family vault of laypeople. They are all centrally located on the east-west axis of the building, the first being at such a distance from the east wall that it indicates the probable boundary line of the chancel. The other three stones (today in different rooms) are in a straight line with the first, indicating the probable center aisle. This leads the writer to assume that what is today the basement was originally the floor of the main church. If this be correct, it would indicate that the repairs of 1830 included the raising of the side walls and the installation of the present floor level for the main church. Actually, we do not know much about these alterations. One should not leave St. Paul's, however, without noting it as the burial place of one of America's greatest actors, Edwin Forrest.

Resuming the account of St. Peter's, we find the favored offspring of Christ Church well on its way to completion in the summer of 1761; this was reported in a vestry meeting on 13 August,⁵⁸ and at the same time

⁴⁹ Barratt, *op. cit.*, 45.

⁵⁰ Perry, *op. cit.* 2: 323. The entire letter is printed on pp. 319-324.

⁵¹ Kearsley's plan for seating in Christ Church, 1761. CCh-Mss., drawer 26. This plan consists of nine proposals, the eighth of which is worthy of note: "That School Boys and apprentices be seated in the upper Gallery of the West End of Christ Church, and that the Sexton or other fit Person be appointed (as heretofore) a Super Visor & Director. . . ."

⁵² Barratt, *op. cit.*, 206-209, has an abstract of deeds.

⁵³ *Penna. Archives*, Eighth Series 7: 5709-5710, 5732.

⁵⁴ Gilchrist, Agnes A., *William Strickland, architect and engineer, 1788-1854*, 83, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950.

⁵⁵ Hazard's *Register of Pennsylvania* . . . 7: 48, 15 Jan. 1837. (From the *United States Gazette*.)

⁵⁶ Mutual Assurance Co., Policy No. 5182, Survey No. 3605, February 1831. (Ms.)

⁵⁷ These are (from east to west): the Rev. Samuel Magaw (1781-1804), the Rev. Joseph Pilmore (1804-1821), and the Rev. Benjamin Allen (1821-1829). The lay family is that of John Ross.

⁵⁸ Vestry minutes 1761-1784: 4.

it was "Resolved that the [new] Church be Named St. Peter's."

This chapel was actually opened on 4 September 1761 with a special service and sermon delivered by the Provost of the College, the Rev. Dr. Smith;⁵⁹ and a bit before this, the vestry (out of appreciation for the gift of land at Third and Pine) turned over to the Proprietary Family of Pennsylvania for its occupancy at no cost⁶⁰ "the first and best Pew in said Church."⁶¹ Really, though, the building was not completed as this report of a couple of years later shows: "The said Church is now [2 March 1763] happily finished (the pulpit and Chancel excepted) : . . we have disbursed and paid the Sum of" £4765-19-6 1/2 in building it;⁶² but by April, 1764, Robert Smith had at last built a pulpit and reading desk in addition to erecting rails around the chancel.⁶³ It is presumed that he did this in



FIG. 5. St. Peter's interior, looking toward the altar; photograph taken from the pulpit, part of which is visible (much out of focus) in the lower right-hand corner.

the "double ended" style to be seen today, which is quite unusual: the altar is on the east end and the pulpit on the west (fig. 5). Quite likely this condition prevailed in 1782, because then the pulpit and reading desk were definitely at the west,⁶⁴ thus leaving the customary east end free for the chancel.

With the building now essentially completed, one could expect a pause for relief. St. Peter's was now standing at Third and Pine so that people in this part of town would not have to traverse endless muddy streets in order to reach Christ Church. But in Febru-



FIG. 6. Interior of Christ Church today; note the same pulpit (built in 1770) shown in figure 7. Courtesy of Christ Church.

ary of 1768—some fifteen years after the original agitation for a new church—the vestry of the United Churches reported, "The Streets leading to St. Peter's Church not being paved are often so bad that people cannot come to Church."⁶⁵

CHRIST CHURCH, 1765-1800

From the beginning, Christ Church (like most Anglican churches in the Colonies) had not been a corporation; members of the parish (generally clergy and vestrymen) in their private capacities held property for the church. Steps to change this condition were made after the building of St. Peter's, so on 28 June 1765 a charter of incorporation was granted⁶⁶ to "the Rector, Church Wardens and Vestry Men of the united Episcopal Churches of Christ Church and St. Peter's. . . ." ⁶⁷ Remember, of course, that St. Peter's was an offspring of Christ Church and was thus kept a part of the mother parish.

Returning to Christ Church itself, we find in January, 1767, the excellent organ built by Philip Fyring was finished "& the Key lodged with the Rector."⁶⁸ But lest one suppose that all was going well, the vestry lamented in June that the church was

much out of repair, both within and without; that it wanted whitewashing and new painting; that a great deal of glass in the windows was broken, and the leads for the most part wanted repair, and to be soldered again. . . . [Furthermore] the Work at the East-End of the Church was so bad as to be in Danger of falling.⁶⁹

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁶⁰ Till the mid-nineteenth century, everyone had to pay for his seat in an Episcopal church; happily, this is a relic of the past.

⁶¹ Vestry minutes 1761-1784: 7.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 58-60.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 426.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 180.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

⁶⁷ The engrossed copy of this charter is in the basement vault of Washburn House.

⁶⁸ Vestry minutes, 1761-1784: 160.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 175-176.



FIG. 7. Interior of Christ Church, mid-nineteenth century; this may be contrasted with the appearance today (fig. 6). Courtesy of Christ Church.

Because the church's coffers were low, the rector advanced the necessary cash for these repairs⁷⁰—a mere £464.⁷¹ The overhauling included the chancel, “particularly the Gilding; and ye Paintings on the Arch would likewise want to be mended.”⁷² These paintings have long since been covered over (fig. 6), but a small print of the mid-nineteenth century indicates them with a large cherub centrally located above the east window (fig. 7).

Two years later, the pulpit again became an item of concern. With bequeathed funds, the church ordered a new one, and in June, 1770, this pulpit (designed and built by John Folwell for £70)⁷³ was finished. This same wine-glass pulpit, which stands in Christ Church today, was originally placed “at the Front of the Communion Table,”⁷⁴ i.e., approximately at the front of the nave.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 186.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 176.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 191.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 192.

While a future signer of the Declaration of Independence, Francis Hopkinson, was fill-in organist,⁷⁵ Christ Church steeple (about twenty years old) was found to be in a very sorry state. According to a report by its builder, Robert Smith (in May, 1771), “the Sells on which the principal Posts stand were decayed,”⁷⁶ but there was no danger of the steeple's falling immediately.⁷⁷ Smith undertook to repair the steeple⁷⁸ and found that he had a job on his hands. A note of 1 August 1771 pled, “I shall be well pleased to see some of the Vestry now and then at the steeple to see how we go on. I have got A very difficult piece of Business. I think it is more so than any I Ever had before.”⁷⁹ The repairs, completed within a year, were probably rather extensive for they cost £644.⁸⁰

In November, 1773, “The Church Warden reported the miserable State of ye Windows”;⁸¹ those on the west end were “found totally incapable of Repair,”⁸² so the Rev. Jacob Duché “made a Draught of some Sash Windows, that would answer the Purpose, and be done in the cheapest Manner.”⁸³ That the work was necessary is attested to by the fact that “the Persons who had seats under and near those Windows complained that they could not attend Church, if they were not instantly repaired.”⁸⁴ Prior to this time, it seems that all the windows of Christ Church were of small panes in lead frames.

The storm clouds of impending war with England were gathering; after open conflict had broken out, the Continental Congress set aside 20 July 1775 as a day of general humiliation, fasting, and prayer, while Christ Church held “divine Service . . . [with] proper Prayers & Sermons.”⁸⁵ Christopher Marshall recorded in his diary: “I went to Christ Church, where an excellent sermon was preached on the occasion . . . unto a large and crowded auditory, amongst whom were, I presume, all the delegates [to the Continental Congress.]”⁸⁶ Then another day of general humiliation was recommended by Congress for 17 May 1776 at which time special services were again held in Christ Church.⁸⁷

Often it is asserted that the Christ Church bells rang on the momentous Fourth of July; more likely they rang on the eighth (as we shall see in a moment) when the Declaration of Independence was first read to the public.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 200.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 212.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 213.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁷⁹ Unsigned note on the same sheet with Robert and John Smith notes, 1 August 1771. CChMss., drawer 26.

⁸⁰ Vestry minutes, 1761–1784: 255.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 277.

⁸² *Loc. cit.*

⁸³ *Loc. cit.*

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 278.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 313.

⁸⁶ Duane, William, *Passages from the diary of Christopher Marshall . . .*, 32, Phila., Hazard & Mitchell [1849].

⁸⁷ Vestry minutes, 1761–1784: 337.

The Fourth, we are quite sure, was just another day so far as the people were concerned; Congress sat behind closed doors, and its activities—including the Declaration—were secret. But news of the Declaration reached the Christ Church vestry which met (according to the date in its minutes) on 4 July 1776. Sources for this information could have been several: Congressmen Franklin, Morris, and Hopkinson were either members or adherents of Christ Church; the Rev. Jacob Duché was chaplain of Congress and rector of Christ Church; three of the vestry were possibly relatives of Congressmen;^{87a} the Rev. William White was friendly with many members of Congress. Further speculation could suggest other ways of transmitting the news—conversations in taverns, social relations between Congressmen and parishioners, and the eternal fact that prominent people are often “in the know.” Consequently, the vestry minutes, speaking of nothing else on 4 July 1776, definitely assert:

Whereas the “Honble Continental Congress” have resolved to declare the American Colonies to be free & Independent States, In Consequence of which it will be proper to omit those Petitions in the Liturgy wherein the King of Great Britain is prayed for, as inconsistent with the said Declaration. Therefore Resolved . . . to omit the said Petitions.
 . . .⁸⁸

And just two years earlier, the vestry had resolved that the church bells should be rung on the king's birthday.⁸⁹

Four days later the Declaration was read publicly. Christopher Marshall noted, “There were bonfires, ringing bells, with other great demonstrations. . . .”^{89a} And John Adams wrote to Samuel Chase, “The Declaration was yesterday [8 July 1776] published and proclaimed from . . . the State-house yard. . . . The bells rang almost all day and all night. Even the chimers chimed away. . . .”^{89b} With these (and other) references to bell ringing, it is hardly likely that the Christ Church bells were silent. Moreover, in a separate sentence, Adams stated, “Even the chimers chimed away. . . .” The only set—or *chime*—of bells in Philadelphia was at Christ Church, and apparently Adams singled them out. Although the author has found no straightforward assertion of the event, there seems to be no doubt that the Christ Church bells welcomed the Declaration on 8 July 1776.

But returning from celebration to every day realities, a war was in progress. And if war were not enough,

^{87a} Among those vestrymen present at their historic meeting on 4 July, we find: James Humphreys, James Biddle, and Richard Willing. (*Ibid.*, 338.) Serving in the Pennsylvania delegation to the Continental Congress during the year 1776 were: Charles Humphreys, Edward Biddle, and Thomas Willing. (*Biographical congressional directory . . . 1774-1911 . . .*, 27, Wash., Govt. Print. Off., 1913.)

⁸⁸ Vestry minutes, 1761-1784: 338.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 296.

^{89a} Duane, *op. cit.*, 81.

^{89b} Burnett, Edmund C., *Letters of members of the continental congress* 2: 7-8, Wash., Carnegie, 1923.

in 1777 (on 9 June) the steeple was struck by lightning and “the Electric Rod & Conductor . . . [were] thereby rendered totally useless”; so steps were taken to secure a new lightning rod.⁹⁰ Besides that, one of the clergy (Thomas Coombe) was incarcerated for being a probable Tory⁹¹ and was whisked away with other prisoners. Then a few months later, during the British occupation, the rector was in the same boat—almost literally. The Rev. Jacob Duché, who had been applauded as Chaplain of the Continental Congress in 1774-1776, turned Tory and departed for England late in 1777.⁹²

But by September, 1777, Lord Howe's army had become the formidable opponent. To prevent the enemy from securing valuable supplies of metal should Philadelphia be captured (as it was in October), the Executive Council of Pennsylvania ordered that the Liberty Bell,⁹³ the bells of Christ Church, and other great amounts of metal be removed for safekeeping. And we find that the State “P[ai]d to Evans and Allison for taking down the bells in the city of Phila. at the approach of the enemy . . . £92.17.6”⁹⁴ Before this was done, the rector (still Duché) had protested “the great risque that would attend the taking down the Bells, the improbability of ever meeting with a Person capable of putting them up again”;⁹⁵ and in November this same reverend (and probably chagrined) gentleman informed the vestry “The Commissary General had taken down & carried away Seven of the said Bells; and likewise the Two Bells from St. Peter's Church.”⁹⁶ Not till a year later (October, 1778), after the Rev. William White had become rector, were they returned by Colonel Flower and installed “at publick expence.”⁹⁷

And in the spring of that same year, still during the British occupation, “It [was] agreed that Dr Wm Smith [Provost of the College and a priest of the Church] shall have the priviledge of cutting the Grass in Christ Church Burying Ground for his use. . . .”⁹⁸ Well, if he had nothing better to do!⁹⁹

After Yorktown, additional work was undertaken on the church. In June, 1782, a gallery for the choir

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 350.

⁹¹ George Bryan (vice president of Council) to the United Churches, 9 September 1777. CChMss., drawer 26.

⁹² Duché announced his attention of going to England in a vestry meeting of 9 December 1777. Vestry minutes 1761-1784: 359. See also: Rightmyer, Nelson W., *Churches under enemy occupation Philadelphia, 1777-8*, *Church History* 14: 9, 1945.

⁹³ Then known as the “State House bell.”

⁹⁴ Journal “A-1” [1775-1786] (Ms.), Comptroller General's Financial Records, p. 69, in State Records Office, Harrisburg.

⁹⁵ Vestry minutes 1761-1784: 356.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 359.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 374.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 367.

⁹⁹ Although the purpose of the reverend doctor's lawn mowing was not stated in the vestry minutes, it may have been that he wanted the grass as feed for animals. At the same time, for instance, the vestry minutes reported and allowed the request of Mrs. Duché “to inclose part of St. Peter's Church Yard for her Cow. Mrs. Duché being accountable for such Posts and Boards as appear to be the property of the Churches.”

(called an "orchestra") was built in front of the organ loft at the west end of the church;¹⁰⁰ in December of 1783 the windows were again repaired, and the churchwarden was authorized to procure curtains for the south windows to prevent sunlight from bothering the people.¹⁰¹ In the spring, 1784, more columns were added to help support the gallery,¹⁰² till finally the church interior was pretty well overlaid with Grecian trimmings: "Back and around the pulpit is neatly finished with large fluted pilasters in the full Doric Order"—and the same applied to the rest of the inside.¹⁰³ Just a few months

¹⁰⁰ Vestry minutes 1761-1784: 425-426.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 433.

¹⁰² Vestry minutes 1784-1815: 37.

¹⁰³ Mutual Assurance Co., Policy No. 5127, Survey No. 2378, October 1816. (Ms.) The text of this survey follows:

SURVEY of . . . Christ Church.—Situate on the West side of Second, between High & Mulberry Streets,—Dimensions, 61 feet by 90 feet, & about 36 feet high. First floor, divided into a Number of Wainscoted pews. painted Capping. Aisle floors paved with Brick, pew floors heart pine bds.—A neat pulpit with a Canopy supported by an open pilaster. Ionic Cap. Continued double painted handrail Stairs, neat Brackets, turned ballusters. A Circular Chancel, painted Rail & turned ballusters. Back & about the pupit is neatly finished with large fluted pilasters in the full Doric Order. A large venetian window—3 Arch head doors, plain Jamb Brick Arches,—Gallery around 3 Sides, Supported in part by 13 plain turned Colloums. & 6 large fluted Colloums on pedestals. & 6 fluted pilasters to match, all finished in the full Doric Order,—Arches extending from one Colloum to the Other from East to West,—gallery front wainscoted. The pews in the gallery Similar to those on the first floor, Cieling in 3 Arches,—Roof Broken pitch, a fourth worn [.] framed with principal Rafters,—2 Trap door. Turned Ballustrading on 2 Sides,—Arch head windows, glass 11 by 13 inches,—Gallery floor heart pine bds. 2 flight open newell painted Strait handrail Stairs. Close String, turned ballusters,—Steeple, 30 feet Square, & 190 feet high part of Brick & part of wood. The first Story Contains an open newell painted Strait handrail Stairs. turned ballusters. Close String, floord with Brick. Communicates by 2 door ways with the Church, whole plaister'd, other Sections in 3 Rooms,—Ringing Rooms, Bellfry &c not plaistered. plain Common Stairs, floors heart pine bds.—from the Bellfry upwards is the Lantern, Spire &c. the exterior is so well known, that a description Seems almost unnecessary.—Access [?] around for Engines. water plenty

\$7500 Octbr 1816 Philip Justus

On the within described Church \$7500

 @ 4 [%] \$300. -

Policy & incidental expences @ 30 Cents 22.50

 \$322.50

The within is a correct Survey of the Premis as now insured
Philada November 8th 1816
Danl Smith

This survey, to be sure, was made some thirty years after the alterations cited in the text; but except for accounts of thorough repainting and window repairs in 1814 (see vestry minutes of summer, 1814, and documents in CChMss., drawer 13), the author has found no evidence of any appreciable alterations in the interior between 1784 and 1816. Therefore, the interior of 1784 was probably the same as that of 1816. Nor has the author found evidence of any appreciable changes between 1814 and 1836. In that year, Thomas U. Walter (architect of the dome

before these changes were made, William White had been consecrated to the episcopate in Lambeth Palace Chapel (4 February 1787) at the hands of the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and the Bishop of Peterborough.

A bishop's chair, possibly the oldest one in America, was presented to the parish several months after White's consecration. This cathedra (fig. 8) is most likely the one still used today in Christ Church where it stands on the gospel (stage right) side of the altar. On 11 October 1787 "The Rector [Bishop White] mentioned to this Vestry the Presents lately made to the Church by Mr. John Swanwick . . . of an Episcopal Chair . . .



FIG. 8. Cathedra or bishop's chair, possibly the oldest one in America, in Christ Church. Courtesy of Christ Church.

the Same was accepted by this Vestry and their thanks Voted to the Gentlem[a]n. . . ." ¹⁰⁴ The chair is an unpretentious one, in keeping with the milieu of post-Revo-

of the Capitol in Washington) undertook extensive interior alterations, primarily to restore to Christ Church its "*pristine beauty*." (Italics supplied.) This term, along with the insurance company's description, indicates that by the late 1700's the church interior was, as asserted in the text, "pretty well overlaid with Grecian trimmings." The text of Walter's report is printed in Dorr, *op. cit.*, 338-343, and a Ms. version (undoubtedly Walter's original report) is in CChMss., drawer 27. The two items have been compared by the present writer; with the exception of trivial changes in capitalization, punctuation, and the like, the printed version is a faithful one.

¹⁰⁴ Vestry minutes 1784-1815: 39.



FIG. 9. Miter from the Christ Church steeple. The relative size of this miter may be gauged by comparing it with the bench and the weather vane. Both ornaments may be seen in place in figure 1. Courtesy of Christ Church.

lutionary life in the American Republic, merely a well made, upholstered armchair, but bearing atop the back a carved wooden miter. Unless the first American bishop, Samuel Seabury of Connecticut (consecrated 14 November 1784),¹⁰⁵ had a cathedra, then White's is undoubtedly the first in this country.¹⁰⁶ Other gifts included a new font and mahogany communion table (the latter now encased in the stone altar) from Jonathan Gostelowe in January, 1789;¹⁰⁷ the font in use today, however, is believed to be the old one which was brought from England in 1697.

During August and October of 1789, "the most important convention ever held by the Episcopal Church"¹⁰⁸ met in Christ Church. This General Convention achieved the unity of the Anglican Church in America; adopted a constitution, canons, and Prayer Book; and thus made the Church independent from Britain in ecclesiastical politics as the nation had become independent in secular politics. In this manner, with two native bishops in addition to William White, the eighteen-century old apostolic polity was planted in America.

¹⁰⁵ The following is the sequence of the first five American bishops with the dates of their consecrations: (1) Samuel Seabury (Conn.) 14 Nov. 1784; (2) William White (Penna.) 4 February 1787; (3) Samuel Provoost (N. Y.) 4 February 1787; (4) James Madison [cousin of the President] (Va.) 19 September 1790; (5) Thomas J. Claggett [first bishop consecrated in America] (Md.) 17 September 1792. Source: *Living Church Annual*, 1951 ed., 356.

¹⁰⁶ Although Christ Church was the bishop's church, it is not accurate for one to consider this a cathedral. Without going into a lengthy description of the differences between a parish church and a cathedral church, suffice it to say that Christ Church never was a cathedral simply because it was not built as one nor was it ever designated as one. Not till American life became more complex were cathedral churches necessary; then they were instituted.

¹⁰⁷ Vestry minutes, 1784-1815: 46.

¹⁰⁸ Addison, James T., *The Episcopal Church in the United States . . .*, 65, N. Y., Scribner's, 1951.

During the following year, America's illustrious Benjamin Franklin died in April and was buried in Christ Church cemetery. In his diary, Jacob Hiltzheimer stated:

In the afternoon I went to the State House, and from there the members of Council and eight members of the Assembly proceeded to the house of Dr. Benjamin Franklin, who died . . . in the 85th year of his age. The body was conveyed to Christ Church ground on [Fifth and] Arch Street. I never saw so many people attend a funeral before.¹⁰⁹

With the new national government under the Constitution making Philadelphia its capital from 1790 to 1800, Christ Church made provisions for accommodating the President, George Washington. A committee reported in November, 1790, "that they have obtained a double Pew in the middle Isle of [Christ] Church" by the removal of former occupants, who would "be reinstated whenever the public use . . . will be discontinued. . . . The Rector & the Church Wardens are requested to wait on the President after his arrival with the Key of the Said pew."¹¹⁰ Apparently this pew was redecorated for the Chief Executive, because we find a contemporary bill "To Covering a large Pew and brass nailing, £3-10-0; To 30 yards Silk lace for Cushions, £1-2-6"; from this same bill, one gathers that the pew may have been upholstered with green silk.¹¹¹ And in just the following month (December, 1790), "2 Urns" costing £1-8-0 were purchased "for the Presidents pew."¹¹² Though Washington and his family also attended St. Peter's, they occupied this pew in Christ Church during both of his presidential terms.

Shortly before inauguration day, 1797, Adams was offered the use of this pew.¹¹³ His not being an Episcopalian undoubtedly accounts for the vestry's statement that

whereas the Presidents Pew in Christ Church will only be occasionally occupied by the President of the United States—Resolved that The Right Revd Dr White be requested to make use of the same reserving the Right of Accommodating the President of the United States at such times as he shall choose to attend.¹¹⁴

The famous golden miter (fig. 9) on Christ Church steeple, taken down as recently as 1951 for regilding, presents an enigma. Where did it come from and when? Certainly it was in place by 1794, and it was hardly put up before 1787. The latter date marks William White's consecration to the episcopacy, and the former a strange controversy in the public press. On 22 August 1794 a long letter signed by "A Friend to

¹⁰⁹ Parsons, J. C., *Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer . . .*, 161, Phila., Fell, 1893.

¹¹⁰ Vestry minutes, 1784-1815: 57.

¹¹¹ William Bankson's bill, 10 November [?] 1790. CChMss, drawer 11.

¹¹² Estate of James Reynolds' bill, 5 December 1790. CChMss., drawer 11.

¹¹³ Vestry minutes 1784-1815: 103.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 106.

civil and religious freedom"¹¹⁵ in the Philadelphia *General Advertiser* retorted to a complaint against the ornament. The critic had charged that democracy was being reviled by this symbol of monarchy which should be removed. But the unidentified "Friend to civil and religious freedom" rightly stormed the miter had nothing to do with monarchy, rather it stood for episcopacy. And it was staying on the Episcopal church.¹¹⁶ And it has. But when it first got there, we don't know.

Regardless of disputes about the pontifical pinnacle, the bells beneath it gained in popularity. On 22 February 1797, "this being the anniversary of the birthday of the President of the United States," the Mayor of Philadelphia (Hilary Baker) requested that the Christ Church bells be rung.¹¹⁷ Then in summer of the following year, during the undeclared naval war with France, the Mayor again wrote,

Captain Decatur¹¹⁸ [*sic*] having captured and brought into Port a French Privateer which a few Days since captured the American Ship Liberty, Captain Urdenberg [?], on our

¹¹⁵ Handwritten copy, dated 21 August 1794, CChMss., drawer 11. A textual comparison between this and the newspaper version has not been made.

¹¹⁶ The letter referred to also dwelt on complaints about the bust of George II on Christ Church. Much more research is necessary to unravel both this and the miter controversy. The reader may have heard other accounts (as the author has) saying "George III"; which George is under consideration, the present writer does not know.

¹¹⁷ Hilary Baker to the Corporation of Christ Church, 22 February 1797. CChMss., drawer 11.

¹¹⁸ It is interesting to note that Stephen Decatur is buried in St. Peter's churchyard; his grave lies west of the church. Other notable people buried there are Charles Willson Peale, the Rev. Jacob Duché, John Nixon, Benjamin Chew, and Nicholas Biddle.

Coast, it is the wish of several of our Fellow-Citizens that this first Victory of the American Navy should be announced to the Citizens to morrow [9 July 1798] by the ringing of the Bells of Christ Church. . . .¹¹⁹

That fall the bells were rung on 10 November to celebrate the arrival into Philadelphia of the aged Father of His Country.¹²⁰ This may have been the last time they were so rung, just before the government was preparing to leave Philadelphia for the banks of the Potomac, till the following winter when Mayor Robert Wharton addressed this sorrowful request to the churchwarden on 18 December 1799:

Pursuant to a resolution passed . . . in Common Council, I am directed to request that the Church Bells under your care may be muffled for the three succeeding days as a mark of the deep regret with which the Citizens of this place view the melancholy news of the Death of our beloved fellow Citizen Lieth General Washington—the expense will be paid by the Councils.¹²¹

As the capital period closed in Philadelphia, as Washington's career ended, the American Episcopal Church had just become autonomous and organized; so a century of activity was brought to a close. Christ Church, St. Peter's, and St. Paul's were all destined to undergo more interior changes during the coming century and a half. But their exteriors today, hardly changed from those of the past day, carry the modern visitor back to make him a contemporary of Franklin, Washington, and White.

¹¹⁹ Hilary Baker to the United Churches, 8 July 1798, CChMss., drawer 11.

¹²⁰ Unaddressed note from the Mayor, Robert Wharton, 10 November 1798, CChMss., drawer 11.

¹²¹ Robert Wharton to Thomas Cumpston [Church Warden], 18 December 1799. CChMss., drawer 11.

ST. JOSEPH'S AND ST. MARY'S CHURCHES

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WITHIN a block of each other in downtown Philadelphia are two of the most important churches in the history of American Catholicism. One is "Old St. Joseph's" in Willing's Alley between Third and Fourth Streets. The other, "Old St. Mary's," lies a block south of it on the west side of Fourth Street. Together, in one respect at least they testify to the success of William Penn's holy experiment and universality of his Charter of Privileges. For of all the thirteen original colonies before the Revolution, only the Penns permitted Catholics to worship publicly.¹

I. OLD ST. JOSEPH'S, THE "MOTHER" CHURCH

First reference to a Mass in Philadelphia is found in a letter by the Reverend John Talbot, a non-juring Episcopal minister, to George Keith of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, in London, dated February 14, 1708. He writes that Mass is "set up and read publicly in Philadelphia, among which Lionel Britton, the church warden, is one, and his son another."² This is substantiated in a letter of the following year by William Penn to James Logan.³

There is no evidence, however, of a chapel or house permanently set aside for worship.⁴ Most likely none existed here, nor even in the other British colonies save Maryland.⁵ From that erstwhile Catholic colony, instead, came Jesuit missionary priests occasionally to tend to the spiritual needs of a few professed Catholics.⁶ Among the missionaries was the Reverend Joseph Grea-ton, an Englishman, who may have visited Philadelphia

as early as 1720 or 1721.⁷ He did not establish permanent residence here, however, until sometime between 1729 and 1733.

The precise date of the founding of St. Joseph's eludes us. Thompson Westcott, citing Griffin, the early Catholic historian, states that Father Grea-ton acquired the land in 1729, started construction of the chapel in 1731, and celebrated the first Mass in 1732.⁸ But Griffin himself corrects that statement sixteen years later by asserting that St. Joseph's "almost certain[ly]" was built in 1734. He cites evidence which has been verified by the present writer: First, that on May 14, 1733, John Dixon bought a lot on the south side of Walnut Street east of Fourth and on the following day conveyed it to the Reverend Joseph Grea-ton; and second, that on July 25, 1734, Lieutenant-Governor Patrick Gordon reported to Council that "a House lately built in Walnut Street, in this City, has been sett apart for the Exercise of the Roman Catholick Religion, and is commonly called the Romish Chappell, where several Persons . . . resorted on Sundays, to hear Mass openly celebrated by a Popish Priest."⁹

Whatever the date of the "founding," then, it appears certain that the building was completed sometime between 1733 and 1734. As to the celebration of the "first" Mass in 1732, we may rely on Griffin's conclusion that it was actually at the house of John Dixon on the southside of Chestnut Street below Second.¹⁰

There was obvious concern on the part of some at the sight of a "Romish chappell," and Lieutenant-Governor Gordon was under "no Small concern" to hear about it. Some thought this to be in violation of the Laws of England and the Provincial Council was forced to discuss the matter in formal meeting.¹¹ Father Grea-ton and his Catholics, however, rested their case on the Charter of Privileges—and won. This was a victory for Pennsylvania's first constitution, and for religious freedom.

The number comprising the first congregation is variously estimated at eleven, twelve, thirty-seven, and forty; thirty-seven appears to be the most likely figure.¹²

¹ Griffin, Martin I. J., William Penn the Friend of Catholics, *Rec. Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc.* (hereafter cited as *Records*) 1: 79, 83, 1884-1886; Keith, Charles P., *Chronicles of Pennsylvania* 1: 159, Philadelphia, privately published, 1917; Stillé, Charles J., Religious tests in provincial Pennsylvania, *Pa. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 9: 376-377, 1885.

² Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* 2: 1365, Philadelphia, L. H. Everts, 1884; Griffin, Martin I. J., ed., *Amer. Cath. Hist. Researches* (hereafter cited as *Researches*) 7: 50-51, 1890 and 17: 167, 1900.

³ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*

⁴ Watson in his *Annals* 1: 452-454 and 3: 316-318 mentions three places where public Catholic worship might have been held; but his informants are vague and unreliable. He mentions, for instance, a house on the northwest corner of Front and Walnut Streets; but Thompson Westcott effectively disposes of this statement by pointing out that the house was actually lived in by Quakers until 1822. See *History of Philadelphia* (Book of clippings) 2: chap. CXV, Philadelphia [five volumes of clippings from the *Sunday Dispatch*] Stauffer coll., Hist. Soc. of Pa., 1867.

⁵ Devitt, E. I., Planting of the Faith in America, *Records* 6: 174, 1895.

⁶ Griffin, William Penn the Friend of Catholics, *Records* 1: 79-83.

⁷ Purcell, Richard, Joseph Grea-ton, *Dict. Amer. Biog.* 7: 527, New York, Charles Scribner's, 1931; *Researches* 9: 19, 1889, 16: 64-68, 1899, and 17: 168, 1900.

⁸ *Ibid.* 16: 82-83, 1899; Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*, 1366; and Jackson, Joseph, *Encyclopedia of Philadelphia* 2: 392, Philadelphia, Nat'l Hist. Assn., 1931.

⁹ Deed Books F-6, 184-187, and RLL-41, 456-458 [City Hall, Phila.]; *Colonial Records* (Min. of Prov. Council) 3: 546-547, Philadelphia, Commonwealth of Penna., 1882; *Researches* 8: 50-51, 1891, and 16: 82-84, 1899.

¹⁰ *Ibid.* 17: 168, 1900; Keith, *op. cit.* 2: 754.

¹¹ *Colonial Records* 3: 546-547, 563-564.

¹² Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*; Keith, *op. cit.*; *Researches* 19: 11. The latter source contains an extract from the

The site of the chapel, back of Walnut Street below Fourth [D, V], was then in the outskirts of the city. To the south lay meadowland. Willing's Alley did not exist then but was part of an open field to Spruce Street. Across Spruce, in the meadow, stood the recently erected Bettering House. The Quaker Almshouse almost adjoined St. Joseph's on the east toward Third, while to the west was an apple orchard and land belonging to the Shippens. Out Walnut Street from Fourth was field and forest. There were few houses west of Fourth. At Walnut above Fourth the ground descended toward the north and at what is now Sansom Street was about ten feet below surface. This was later known as "Beek's Hollow."¹³

Very little is known about this earliest "St. Joseph's" structure. By all accounts it was extremely small, eighteen feet wide and twenty-two or twenty-eight feet long,¹⁴ extending in an east-west direction. Exteriorly it resembled a house. One authority states that it had the appearance of an "out-kitchen."¹⁵ We are equally in the dark as to its interior. Richard Hockley who visited the chapel in 1742 simply says that there was an "inner room within the chapel with sliding shutters that looked into the chappel"; and that the pulpit was adorned with crimson velvet cushion and gold-fringed cloth.¹⁶ Undoubtedly there was an organ, for a contemporary in 1744 speaks of the "fine musick" during services.¹⁷ Peter Kalm, the Swedish traveler, writes in 1750 that "The Roman Catholics have in the southwest part of the town a large building which is well adorned within and has an organ."¹⁸ Kalm's use of the word "large" seems to be an exaggeration.

By 1757 the congregation had increased to such an extent that the old chapel no longer proved adequate. It was razed to the ground and replaced by one forty-six feet by fifty feet.¹⁹ This chapel remained substan-

pamphlet, *The present state of the Catholic Missions conducted by the Jesuits in North America*, written by Patrick Smith (who visited America in 1787-1788) of the Diocese of Meath, Ireland, which reads in part: "I conversed a few months ago with an old German (Paul Millar, of Conewago) who belonged to the first Catholic congregation which assembled in that city, Philadelphia. Twenty-two Irish and the rest Germans formed in all, but thirty-seven Catholics. . . ."

¹³ *Researches* 9: 19-20, and 16: 81.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* 9: 22-24; Jordan, P. A., Historical narrative of St. Joseph's Church, 21, Philadelphia, unpublished manuscript, Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc. coll. [1873]. Keith, *op. cit.*, gives the dimensions as eighteen feet by twenty-eight feet; so does Kirlin, Joseph, An English benefactor of Colonial times, *Records* 26: 78-79, 1915.

¹⁵ Jordan, *op. cit.*, 21.

¹⁶ Selected Letters from the Letter-Book of Richard Hockley, 1739-1742, *Pa. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 28: 43, 1904; cf. *Researches* 19: 9.

¹⁷ Bridenbaugh, Carl, ed., *Gentlemen's progress*, 190, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1948.

¹⁸ Benson, Adolph B., ed., *Peter Kalm's travels in North America* 2: 24, N. Y., Wilson-Erickson, 1937.

¹⁹ Mutual Assurance Co. survey for Policy No. 3182, December 12, 1811, *Researches* [N.S.] 1: 60, 1905. Jordan, *op.*



FIG. 1. An anonymous conjectural drawing of St. Joseph's (center) in 1776, attributed to P. A. Jordan. To the left is the clergy house, to the right the schoolhouse. Courtesy Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc. of Phila.

tially unchanged until 1821 when twenty-seven feet were added to its length.²⁰

Several good detailed descriptions of this second chapel have come down to us, although most of these are of nineteenth-century origin. The Reverend Jacob Duché, who visited Father Harding in his "little Carthusian cell" in 1772, described it as "an old Gothic chapel."²¹ That there was indeed a trace of the Gothic in the architecture may be seen from the interior view of 1838 (fig. 2). However, others did not seem to note this feature. Thomas Lloyd,²² for instance, wrote in 1799 that the chapel was "not in any particular of striking style of architecture."²³ While the Reverend Adam Marshall, writing to the Superior-General of the Society of Jesus, went so far as to say that it had "exteriorly more the appearance of a stable than of a church."²⁴

Father Etienne Dubuisson, one of the two Jesuit priests who assumed the administration of St. Joseph's in 1833, in a pamphlet published in Nantes in 1837, describes St. Joseph's in the following perhaps somewhat exaggerated terms:

St. Joseph's Church is a rather poor affair. . . . It is a low depressed-looking edifice, having nothing on the outside that indicates its purpose, so that one might think it an old storehouse at the farther end of the court. The interior is in keeping with the exterior; one would hardly be able to imagine a barer temple, or one less calculated to inspire with a sense of majesty. The sacristy is a little hole three feet and a half wide; and it is so exposed to moisture that during bad weather the linens cannot be kept there. Not-

cit., 52, and Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*, 1370, give the dimensions as sixty feet by forty feet, but neither cite authorities.

²⁰ *Researches* 4: 179, 1887; Jordan, *op. cit.*, 151; Griffin, Martin I. J., Life of Bishop Conwell, *Records* 27: 279, 1916.

²¹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 7, 1774.

²² An English Catholic who served with the American forces in the Revolutionary War and later became official reporter of the first U. S. House of Representatives.

²³ *Researches* 17: 66.

²⁴ Letter, March 5, 1821, *ibid.* [N.S.] 7: 180, 1911.

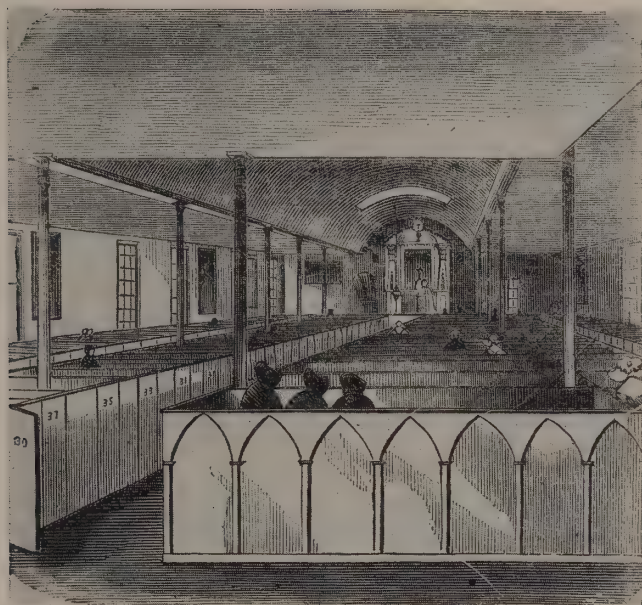


FIG. 2. Interior view of St. Joseph's in 1838 from an anonymous drawing. Courtesy Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc. of Phila.

withstanding these things the faithful, and even *non-Catholics* of Philadelphia, have as profound a feeling of veneration for this church as if it were an ancient shrine. They are heard calling it *the sweet old Church*, . . . and there is a general desire to see it permanently preserved. . . .²⁵

It was a one-story brick building having a broken-pitch roof supported by arches. Within, the keystones of the arches were decorated with cherubim. Thomas Lloyd describes the altar as "neat, approaching even to elegance, and its ornaments in a style of execution by no means disgracing the state of the arts in our city at the time of its erection." Over the altar hung a painting of the Madonna by Benjamin West. A circular railing with turned balusters separated the altar from the rest of the church. The ceiling was arched in the center and flat along the north and south aisles. The walls were whitewashed. There was no gallery, only a small organ loft in the west end. The chancel at the east end enclosed about three-fifths of the width of the building. The lighting was bad, all accounts agree; the few windows in the north and south walls simply afforded some "dim religious light."²⁶

Entrance to the church was through a small doorway at the end of each front. Access was originally only from Walnut Street, until Willing's Alley was opened in 1746 (when Thomas Willing built his mansion on Third Street and needed a passageway to Fourth).

²⁵ *Ibid.* 4: 180, 1887.

²⁶ *Ibid.* 17: 66, 1900; Mutual Assurance Co. survey for Policy No. 3182, December 12, 1811, *ibid.* [N.S.] 1: 60, 1905; Roberts, Kenneth and Anna M., eds., *Morceau de St. Méry's American Journey, 1793-1798*, 339, Garden City [N. Y.], Doubleday, 1947; Jordan, *op. cit.*, 201-204. Cf. Watson, John F., *Annals of Philadelphia* [Hazard's edition] 3: 319-322, Phila., Leary, Stuart, 1927.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century, both approaches were used; those living "uptown" using the Walnut Street entrance and those living to the south using Willing's Alley.²⁷

Until 1763, little St. Joseph's was the only Roman Catholic church in Philadelphia, and for miles around. But with the erection of St. Mary's church that year, it lost much of its importance and became simply a chapel of ease where the clergy said Mass on weekdays. In 1821, however, owing to the protracted (trustee) troubles at St. Mary's, once more St. Joseph's came into its own. From that time on, it has existed as a separate congregation, continuing to this day.

Our knowledge of the "human side" of the chapel's history, its congregation, clergy, and significant events and associations, is limited largely to the period following 1750. The original congregation, as already mentioned, consisted of not more than forty individuals. They were Irish and German, mostly poor tradesmen and servants. By 1757, the Germans outnumbered the Irish.²⁸ Then came other groups. Among the most colorful were the Acadians; theirs is a tragic tale.

Expelled by the thousands from their native Nova Scotia by the British in 1755 during the French and Indian Wars, because of their loyalty to France, 454 of these unfortunates arrived in Philadelphia that year. Through the efforts of Anthony Benezet, they were quartered in a row of one-story wooden houses on Pine Street not far from the chapel. Those who survived became communicants of St. Joseph's. They were familiar figures in the neighborhood.²⁹ Longfellow immortalized their tragic story in *Evangeline*

Under the humble walls of the little Catholic churchyard,
In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown and unnoticed.

There is a tradition that Seneca Indians, converted by the French, used to attend St. Joseph's in the early days. It is also said that some negro slaves were among the converts, for whom special services called "Evening Hymns" were held. Then, in the 1790's, a large number of white and black refugees arrived in Philadelphia from Santo Domingo. Accompanied by their own priest, they became attached to St. Joseph's as a separate congregation. They had special permission to hold divine services on Sundays. A simple but devout people, they met frequently in the chapel, praying aloud in their native French while counting their beads.³⁰

²⁷ *Researches* 9: 20, and 16: 80-81; Jordan, *op. cit.*, 201-204.

²⁸ *Researches* 9: 20, and 17: 77; Devitt, Planting of the Faith in America, *Records* 6: 178, 1895; Dubbs, J. H., The founding of the German Churches of Pennsylvania, *Pa. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 17: 241-242, 1893; Hazard's *Register* 5: 339; letter of Father Henry Neale to Sir John James, April 25, 1741, in Griffin, Martin I. J., The Sir John James Fund, *Records* 9: 197-198, 1898.

²⁹ *Colonial Records* 6: 711, *et seq.*; Brookes, George S., *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 60-73, *et passim*, Phila., University of Pennsylvania Press, 1937; Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*, 1369.

³⁰ *Researches* 16: 100, 151; Jordan, *op. cit.*, 85-86, 203-204.



FIG. 3. Present St. Joseph's from Archway in Willing's Alley. National Park Service Photo.

The clergy, with one exception, was English throughout the colonial period. Something will be said about the most noted among them, the Reverend Robert Harding, in connection with St. Mary's Church. Beginning with the Federal period and throughout the nineteenth century, however, the complexion of the clergy became predominantly Irish and French. Ecclesiastically, St. Joseph's was a Jesuit institution and remained in the control of that order, with one significant break, throughout its history.³¹

The congregation of St. Joseph's, largely, was made up of simple but devout people. The fashionable and the prominent preferred St. Mary's. (Clear-cut parochial boundaries were not drawn until 1842.) Historically interesting, however, is one notable exception. Joseph Bonaparte, the elder brother of Napoleon and erstwhile King of Naples and Spain, was a pewholder at St. Joseph's. Coming to America in 1815, he re-

mained for many years living in and around Philadelphia. Bonaparte maintained a permanent winter home at Eleventh and Market Streets and a summer estate near Bordentown, N. J., where Bishop Conwell was a frequent visitor. It is said that his pew was a great, antique affair sufficiently high to discourage the curious. According to tradition passed down by one of the fathers at the church, the exiled monarch was often seen making his way to his pew, accompanied by his two children, and sometimes by a huge Newfoundland dog.³²

There are unpleasant events, too, connected with the history of old St. Joseph's. On three occasions, in 1740, 1755, and 1844, anti-Catholic rioters threatened the church with destruction. The most serious because most imminent occurred in 1755, when anti-Catholic feeling following the news of Braddock's defeat ran high. Only the intercession of a number of brave Quakers, citing the Charter of Privileges, succeeded finally in pacifying the mob.³³

An unpatriotic episode relates to the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777-1778, when some Catholics (no less than others) were found to favor the British cause. Among the 180 Catholics who enrolled in the Roman Catholic Regiment of Philadelphia in the service of Great Britain, there were several whose names appear in St. Joseph's church records; Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Clifton, commander of the regiment, was one of them.³⁴

St. Joseph's assumed its greatest importance, ecclesiastically at least, in 1821, during the troubled times at St. Mary's. Bishop Conwell, locked out of his own cathedral, made St. Joseph's for a time his pro-cathedral. Many of the congregation followed him thither. To accommodate this abnormally expanded congregation, at least one-third of whom had to attend Mass in the open air, the small chapel was enlarged that year by twenty-seven feet. Even when St. Mary's reopened again in 1829 and some of her former flock returned, St. Joseph's still retained a large and flourishing congregation. Moreover, in 1833 she achieved full status as a separate parish.³⁵ But the venerated old chapel could not meet the demands of her new role; a new and larger church must take her place. And so, on May 7, 1838, final services were held, offered especially "for all living

³¹ *Ibid.*, *passim*; Hughes, Thomas, ed., *History of the Society of Jesus in North America, Colonial and Federal, Documents*, 2v., London, Longman, Green, 1908-1910; Extracts from Letter of Archbishop Carroll to Rev. Mr. Rossiter, concerning church property in Philadelphia, July 13, 1808, *Researches* 14: 64, 1897; Shea, John G., *History of the Catholic Church in the United States* 3: 557-558, Akron, D. H. McBride, 1890; Nolan, Hugh J., *The Most Reverend Francis Patrick Kenrick, Third Bishop of Philadelphia, 1830-1851*, 140, 178, Phila., Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc. of Phila., 1948.

³² Kite, Elizabeth S., Joseph Bonaparte—Ex-King of Spain settles in Philadelphia, 1815, *Records* 53: 129-150, 1942; letter of Bishop Conwell to Archbishop of Baltimore, July 10, 1824, in Griffin, Life of Bishop Conwell, *Records* 27: 363, 1916; Shea, *op. cit.*, 250; Donnelly, Eleanor C., *Memoir of Father Felix Barbelin, S. J.*, 121, Phila., privately published, 1886.

³³ *Researches* 16: 94, 152; Extracts from the Diary of Daniel Fisher, 1755, *Pa. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 17: 273-274, 1893; Jordan, *op. cit.*, 237, 253.

³⁴ The Roman Catholic Regiment of Philadelphia, *Researches* 14: 70.

³⁵ St. Joseph's Church, Philadelphia, in 1836, *ibid.* 4: 179, 1887; Griffin, Life of Bishop Conwell, *Records* 28: 347, 1917; Shea, *op. cit.*, 557-558.

and dead who had ever worshipped within its walls."³⁶ Demolition followed almost immediately, and on June 4 the cornerstone for the present edifice was placed.³⁷

The new St. Joseph's church was consecrated by Bishop Kenrick on February 11, 1839.³⁸ This was an unusual accomplishment in a period of depression, following the Panic of 1837. A year later, on September 27, 1840, it celebrated with impressive ceremonies the three-hundredth anniversary of the confirmation of the Society of Jesus. For the first time in America, Haydn's magnificent "Imperial Mass" was sung, accompanied by an orchestra of over eighty pieces for whom the side pews in the galleries had been removed.³⁹

II. THE FOUNDING OF ST. MARY'S—A NEW ERA

The ground occupied by St. Mary's Church [C, V] was originally acquired by the congregation of St. Joseph's for a burial ground. It formed part of the old grant to John, Thomas, and Richard Penn, conveyed in 1744 to Edward, Joseph, and William Shippen.⁴⁰ Partitioned in 1754, that portion which contains the church and the southern portion of the graveyard, measuring sixty-three feet by three hundred ninety-six feet, was acquired from Joseph Shippen by James Reynolds and Bryan O'Hara.⁴¹ The latter, on January 22, 1760, conveyed this ground to a group of trustees,⁴² who in a Declaration of Trust, filed the next day, stated that the above premises were conveyed to them by direction of the members of the Roman Catholic congregation professing the Roman Catholic religion and belonging to the Roman Catholic chapel; and that they held it in trust for the congregation and for a place to bury their dead forever.⁴³ On May 23, 1763, finally, the trustees conveyed to the Reverend Robert Harding and his heirs, for a consideration of 5 shillings, a portion of the ground on which the church was built.⁴⁴ This portion meas-

ured fifty feet front and eighty feet deep. Erection of the church began shortly thereafter.⁴⁵

Money for the purchase of the grounds, amounting to £328 15s 6d, was contributed by eighty-three members of the congregation of St. Joseph's during the preceding year.⁴⁶

Soon after acquisition of the grounds, active members of the faithful set about obtaining funds for the erection of a church. A total of £1,315 1s 6d was subscribed to the building fund by 1763. Among the 222 subscribers, the majority were Irish, thirty were German, and fifteen French. One of the highest single subscribers, with £40, was George Meade, prominent merchant and great-grandfather of General George Gordon Meade of Civil War fame. The church was probably completed sometime in 1763.⁴⁷

St. Mary's was intended as an appendage of St. Joseph's; however, in 1765, the Superior of Jesuits designated it Mission No. 1. To insure Jesuit control, deed to the church and lot were conveyed to Father Harding, who upon his death willed it to his successor.⁴⁸

Behind the building of St. Mary's lay the guiding spirit of Father Harding. He appears to have been a remarkable man with wide interests. An English Jesuit, Father Harding came to this country in 1732 and labored in Maryland for many years, arriving in Pennsylvania in 1750 as successor to Father Greacon. His zeal in promoting the growth of the Roman Catholic community during its formative years was matched by an active interest in the social problems of his City. He was one of the subscribers to the Pennsylvania Hospital in 1755, and in 1768 a member of the American Philosophical Society. As one of the founding members of the Society of the Sons of St. George, formed in 1772 to aid Englishmen in distress, his position was unique in that he was probably the only Catholic in the membership of this society. And as an indication of his political sentiments, in 1768 he presented to John Dickinson, author of the "Farmer's Letters," an address in behalf of Roman Catholics of Pennsylvania, thanking Dickin-

³⁶ Jordan, *op. cit.*, 190.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 190-195, citing the *U. S. Gazette*, June 5, 1838; *Researches* 13: 96, 1896.

³⁸ [Tourscher, Francis E., ed.], *Diary and visitation record of the Rt. Rev. Francis Patrick Kenrick Administrator and Bishop of Philadelphia 1830-1851*, 173, Phila., Archdiocese of Phila., 1916.

³⁹ Jordan, *op. cit.*, 210-211.

⁴⁰ Recorded March 13, 1744, in Patent Book A, No. 11, 466; see Exemplification Records, 2,665-2,667, at City Hall, Phila.

⁴¹ Deed, May 10, 1759; recorded February 25, 1760, in Deed Book H, No. 11, 308-312. City Hall, Phila.

⁴² Daniel Swan, coachmaker; Thomas Mallaby, rigger; John Cottringer and William Hussey, tailors; Edward Harrington, carpenter; and James White, merchant. Deed recorded in Deed Book H, No. 11, 292-294. Cf. Middleton, Thomas C., *Interments in St. Mary's Burying Ground . . . 1788 to 1800*, *Records* 5: 25-27, 1894; and Wilcox, Joseph, *Some reminiscences connected with St. Mary's Churchyard*, *ibid.* 6: 359-360, 1895.

⁴³ Recorded January 28, 1788, in Deed Book D, No. 19, 462-464.

⁴⁴ Deed Book IC, No. 12, 348-350.

⁴⁵ Devitt, E. I., *Miscellaneous letters to Bishop John Carroll, 1785-1815*, *Records* 19: 401-404, 1908.

⁴⁶ Minute Book of St. Mary's Church [1781-1811], *Records* 4: 272-274, 1893; cf. Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*, 1370.

⁴⁷ Minute Book, *Records* 4: 274-282; Philadelphia Catholic Historical Briefs, *ibid.* 22: 42, 1911; Shea, *op. cit.* 2: 63-64; Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*, 1371. George Meade, brother-in-law of Thomas FitzSimons, was among the signers of the non-importation resolutions promulgated in 1765 against the Stamp Act; see Meade, R. W., *George Meade, A patriot of the Revolutionary era*, *Records* 3: 200, 1888-1891.

⁴⁸ Hughes, *op. cit.* 2: 556-557; letters of Bishop Egan to Bishop Carroll, Feb. 17 and Mar. 16, 1811, in Devitt, *Miscellaneous Letters to Bishop John Carroll, 1785-1815*, *Records* 19: 401-404; two letters to Bishop Conwell, April 6 and May 1, 1821, in *ibid.* 22: 52-53; Extracts from Letter of Archbishop Carroll to Rev. Mr. Rossiter, concerning Church property in Philadelphia, July 13, 1808, *Researches* 14: 64.



FIG. 4. Interior view of St. Mary's ca. 1880, from a lithograph by Packard and Butler. An earlier (ca. 1840) view of the chancel shows some changes of detail in the altar arrangement. Courtesy Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc. of Phila.

son for his patriotic efforts in behalf of British liberty.⁴⁹

The Reverend Jacob Duché, who visited him in 1772 at St. Joseph's, wrote of Father Harding in his *Caspiana Letters*, that he appeared to be "a decent, well-bred Gentleman . . . much esteemed by all denominations of Christians in this city, for his prudence, his moderation, his known attachment to British liberty, and his unaffected pious labors among the people to whom he officiates." His death on September 1, 1772, was greatly lamented and his funeral the next day was attended by most of the leading citizens of the city, lay and cleric alike. He was buried in St. Mary's, near the altar.⁵⁰

We are unable to describe St. Mary's of the eighteenth century in any detail for there are few contemporary descriptions extant. Archbishop John Carroll of Baltimore, visiting Philadelphia in 1789, simply thought that it was "very handsome and large." To Moreau de St. Méry, on the other hand, it had more the appearance of "an ordinary house with a large door in front and another on the side." St. Méry meant probably that the structure lacked a tower or steeple. But Catholic churches in this period of "Anti-Popery" were actually built to appear externally as inconspicuous as possible.

⁴⁹ Tschan, F. J., Robert Harding, *Dict. Amer. Biog.* 8: 250-251; *Pennsylvania Gazette*, May 29, 1755; Bridenbaugh, Carl and Jessica, *Rebels and gentlemen*, 239, N. Y., Reynal & Hitchcock, 1942; Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*

⁵⁰ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 2, 1772; *Pennsylvania Packet*, September 7, 1772.

St. Mary's was apparently a brick structure, rectangular in shape and two or two and a half stories high. Together with plain windows and one or more brick chimneys, it must indeed have looked like an ordinary house.⁵¹

The interior, however, must have offered a sharp contrast to the exterior. Catholics have ever sought to reflect the glory and majesty of God in the rich beauty of their churches. Indeed, it would have been strange if the early priests of St. Mary's, born in Europe and reared in the artistic glories of Catholic tradition, had failed to employ available devices for the adornment and ornamentation of interior appointments. Small wonder, then, that John Adams, born in the iconoclastic sterility of Puritanism which dubbed all religious art "idolatry," was prompted to exclaim in his diary: "The scenery and the music are so calculated to take in mankind, that I wonder the Reformation ever succeeded."⁵²

Following his attendance at Vespers in St. Mary's on the afternoon of October 9, 1774, to which he was "led by curiosity and good company," Adams wrote home to his wife, Abigail, about the things he had seen: "the paintings, the bells, the candles, [and] the gold and silver." The pulpit, he described, was of "velvet and gold"; the altar "very rich," with "little images and crucifixes about, [and] wax candles lighted up." He goes on, impressed if also somewhat scornful:

But how shall I describe the picture of our Saviour, in a frame of marble over the altar, at full length upon the cross, in the agonies, and the blood dripping and streaming from his wounds? The music, consisting of an organ and a choir of singers, went all the afternoon except sermon time, and the assembly chanted most sweetly and exquisitely. Here is everything which can lay hold of the eye, ear, and imagination, everything which can charm and bewitch the simple and ignorant. I wonder how Luther ever broke the spell?⁵³

Among the good company mentioned by Adams was George Washington who also visited St. Mary's that afternoon. Both of course were in Philadelphia as delegates to the First Continental Congress sitting at Carpenters' Hall. Unfortunately Washington left no record of his impressions, simply noting in his diary: "Went to the Presbyterian Meeting in the forenoon and Romish Church in the afternoon."⁵⁴

In 1782 the church interior was extensively "improved and ornamented" and its capacity increased by additional pews. The interior plan for that year shows a largely conventional arrangement. Two aisles paral-

⁵¹ Shea, *op. cit.* 2: 357; Moreau de St. Méry's *American journey*, 339-340.

⁵² Adams, Charles F., ed., *Works of John Adams, second President of the United States* 2: 365, Boston, Little & Brown, 1850.

⁵³ Adams, Charles F., *Familiar letters of John Adams to his wife during the Revolution*, 46, cited in *Researches* 10: 51, 1893.

⁵⁴ Fitzpatrick, John C., ed., *The diaries of General Washington, 1748-1799* 2: 167, Boston, Houghton, 1925.

eling the north and south walls separated the eighty-one ornamented pews of the main floor into three groups or rows. Galleries erected against the north, south, and west walls each held eighteen additional pews. The organ loft in the west gallery was made accessible by a stair in the southwest corner. The east end of the church was occupied by the sanctuary with the pulpit and sacristy on the Epistle side of the altar, to the observer's right, and three pews reserved for ambassadors on the left or Gospel side. Chandeliers embellished with tulip and miter illuminated the church while heat was provided by stoves. Entrance to the church was from Fifth Street, through the churchyard.⁵⁵

In 1805, the ten pews under the end gallery were removed and placed elsewhere. In the same year subscriptions were taken for the building of a new organ to replace the old one. Charles Taws, the famous organ maker, completed this task sometime during 1806, receiving in payment \$2,500.⁵⁶

Many prominent and well-to-do men made up the congregation at St. Mary's in the eighteenth century: merchants, lawyers, sea captains, and the diplomatic set. Among them we find the brothers Garrett and George Meade, wealthy merchants; James Oellers, proprietor of Oellers Hotel; James Byrnes, of the "Golden Fleece" on Front Street and later of Byrnes' Tavern; John Swanwick, a non-Catholic pewholder who defeated Thomas FitzSimons for Congress in 1794; Captain (later Commodore) John Barry, often called the "Father of the American Navy"; Mathew Carey, the noted publisher and writer; John Neagle, the artist; and Thomas FitzSimons, a signer of the Constitution. George Meade and FitzSimons were also trustees of St. Mary's from time to time. The French, Spanish, and Portuguese ambassadors had special pews on the Gospel side of the altar. Many French refugees of the Revolution in the 1790's, among them Moreau de St. Méry, also attended St. Mary's.⁵⁷

Significant associations with the Revolutionary War and Independence are many. The parish was well represented in Washington's forces, headed by such patriots as John Barry, George Meade, Thomas FitzSimons, and Stephen Moylan.⁵⁸

The Continental Congress attended services at St. Mary's on four official occasions. First, on September 18, 1777, they attended a Requiem Mass for General Du Coudray, a French officer who drowned while crossing the Delaware on his way to join Washington. The

day following, with the British about to capture Philadelphia, Congress adjourned and prepared to leave the City. Next, on July 4, 1779, at the invitation of the French Minister Plenipotentiary, the President and members of the Continental Congress attended the chanting of the *Te Deum*, in celebration of the anniversary of independence. It was a most brilliant gathering, as the newspapers described it. M. Gérard expressed himself highly elated, in his report to Foreign Minister Vergennes, on this auspicious effort to cement the Franco-American Alliance.⁵⁹ The third occasion, on May 8, 1780, was a Requiem Mass for Don Juan de Miralles, Spanish Agent, who died at Washington's Headquarters in Morristown. A witness wrote on June 27, 1780:

I found there not only Papists, but Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Quakers, &c. The two chaplains of Congress (one a Presbyterian and the other a Churchman) were amongst the rest. I confess I was pleased to find the minds of people so unfettered with the shackles of bigotry.⁶⁰

Lastly, on Sunday, November 4, 1781, a Mass of Thanksgiving was celebrated at St. Mary's to give public thanks to Almighty God for the victory at Yorktown of the combined armies of the United States and France. Abbé Bandel delivered an "Address to Congress [and the] Supreme Executive Council of the Assembly of Pennsylvania," who were invited by his Excellency, the Minister of France.⁶¹

George Washington attended the church on at least two occasions. His first visit, as already mentioned, was in 1774. The second occurred on May 27, 1787, during the Constitutional Convention. The *Pennsylvania Herald* reported:

On Sunday last his Excellency General Washington, accompanied by a number of respectable members of the protestant and dissenting churches, attended divine service at the catholic chapel. The anthems and other solemn pieces of music performed on this occasion were admirably adapted to diffuse a spirit of devotion throughout a very crowded congregation, and to give effect to our excellent sermon delivered by the Rev. Mr. Beeston.⁶²

The Roman Catholic community in Philadelphia increased considerably in the course of the American Revolution. The number, estimated by Abbé Robin, Chaplain of Rochambeau's forces, ranged between eleven and

⁵⁵ Minute Book, *Records* 4: 266-267, 282-285; Griffin, Bishop Conwell, *ibid.* 28: 345; Middleton, Thomas C., Some debits and credits relating to St. Mary's Church, Philadelphia, *ibid.* 10: 302, 1899.

⁵⁶ Minute Book, *Records* 4: 348-416, *passim*.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 258, 269-271, 294-311; Philadelphia Catholic Historical Briefs, *ibid.* 22: 45; Moreau de St. Méry's *American journey*, 179.

⁵⁸ Griffin, Martin I. J., *Catholics and the American Revolution* 2: 161-185, Phila., privately published, 1909.

⁵⁹ *Pennsylvania Packet*, July 10, 1779; letter of Henry Laurens to William Livingston, July 5, 1779, in Burnett, Edmund C., ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress* 4: 297-298, Washington, Carnegie Institution, 1928; Doc. No. 137, Conrad Alexandre Gérard to Comte de Vergennes, July 6, 1779, in Meng, John J., ed., *Despatches and Instructions of Conrad Alexandre Gérard 1778-1780*, 750, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1939. Cf. *Researches* 6: 50-54, 1889 and 17: 60-62.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 62; letter of Ebenezer Hazard to Jeremy Belknap, *ibid.* 6: 69-70.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 73. Cf. Arme, Ethel, ed., *Nancy Shippen, her journal book*, 125, Phila., Lippincott, 1935.

⁶² Fitzpatrick, *op. cit.* 3: 219; *Pennsylvania Herald*, May 30, 1787.



FIG. 5. St. Mary's churchyard and rear of church.
National Park Service Photo.

twelve hundred. The three clergymen at St. Mary's and St. Joseph's worked with untiring zeal to minister to this flock. Even the British occupation of Philadelphia in 1777–1778 did not seem to put a damper on religious activity, as the parish registers indicate. In 1784, as a milestone in Catholic ecclesiastical history here, Confirmation was administered to a rather large group by Father John Carroll, the Prefect-Apostolic of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. Father Carroll was shortly to become the first bishop of the Diocese of Baltimore.⁶³

In matters of church administration, too, significant changes were taking place. The missionary organization and Jesuit control, following suppression of that Order in 1773, gradually gave way to the trustee system. In 1788, by enactment of the General Assembly of Pennsylvania, St. Mary's congregation became a corporation, empowered to administer church finances and property through trustees. This event was to become a major factor in the troubled history of St. Mary's during the first three decades of the nineteenth century. In 1788, also, a number of Germans seceded from St. Mary's for linguistic reasons and established Holy Trinity Church. Erected at Sixth and Spruce Streets [A. V] and opened in 1789, it became Philadelphia's third Catholic church and the first national church in the United States. The fourth and last Catholic church to be established here before the turn of the century, also as an offshoot of St. Mary's, was St. Augustine's. Completed in 1801, some of the most noted members of St. Mary's, including Commodore Barry, Mathew Carey, and Thomas FitzSimons, as well as the Rev. Matthew Carr, O.S.A., founder of St. Augustine's, transferred to it.⁶⁴

⁶³ Westcott, *Hist. of Phila.* [Stauffer coll., *Hist. Soc. of Pa.*] 3: chap. CCCLXV; Rightmyer, Nelson W., *Churches under enemy occupation, Philadelphia, 1777–1778, Church History* 14: 20, 1945; Shea, *op. cit.* 2: 622.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 319–320; Minute Book, *Records* 4: 269–271; Phila. Cath. Hist. Briefs, *ibid.* 22: 46; Westcott, Thompson, A memoir of the Very Rev. Michael Hurley, *ibid.* 1: 171, 1884–1886.

Little has been said thus far of the historic churchyard of St. Mary's, resting place of John Barry, George Meade, Thomas FitzSimons, Mathew Carey, and Stephen Moylan. Interments were probably made there shortly after the site was acquired. The first interment at St. Mary's seems to have been in 1759, that of the infant child Ann, daughter of one of the trustees, James White and his wife Ann.⁶⁵ However, the earliest tombstone identified in recent years, in the north-west corner of the cemetery, bore the date April 20, 1760.⁶⁶

The first wall surrounding the cemetery, apparently, stood just back of the church. An entry in the minute book reads: "Rec'd from the Managers towards building the outside Wall which deriv'd from the burying Ground . . . £22.0.10." No date is given, but it appears to have been sometime after 1762 or 1763.⁶⁷ The brick wall on the west or Fifth Street end, however, was not constructed until 1794. A gate four feet wide was allowed in this wall "for the convenience of the Congregation."⁶⁸ In 1840 the wall was raised, probably to its present height, and in 1844 an iron railing was erected in the rear of the Church.⁶⁹

The founders expected that the cemetery would serve for a long time. But they did not anticipate a rapid increase in the congregation, nor the yellow fever epidemics of the 1790's. Thus, by 1800 the trustees were forced to purchase two lots at Thirteenth and Spruce Streets to serve as a new burial ground. In 1805, they reported that the old cemetery adjoining the church was so "nearly filled up that it is difficult to find a Spot for a Grave without encroaching on Ground already occupied, which renders it necessary to admit as few as possible therein."⁷⁰

The yellow fever epidemics of the 1790's, but particularly that of 1793, left their impress on the Roman Catholic community. In St. Mary's cemetery by the middle of September of the latter year, more than two hundred graves had been opened. All Catholic priests had been infected. Nevertheless, Fathers Fleming,

⁶⁵ Middleton, Thomas C., *Interments in St. Mary's Burying Ground . . . 1788 to 1800, Records* 5: 25–27; Maitland, John J., *St. Mary's Graveyard . . . Philadelphia, ibid.* 3: 287, 1888–1891; *Researches* 10: 10. James White was the great-grandfather of Edward D. White, ninth Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court; see Cassidy, Lewis C., *Edward Douglass White Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court, Jour. Amer. Irish Hist. Soc.* 26: 234–236, 1927; and Wilcox, Joseph, *Some reminiscences connected with St. Mary's Churchyard, Records* 6: 459–468.

⁶⁶ Scharf and Westcott, *op. cit.*, 1371.

⁶⁷ Minute Book, *Records* 4: 282.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 300–301.

⁶⁹ Minute Book of the Trustees [Ms., ca. 1829–1885], entries for April 20, 1840 and September 23, 1844, manuscript, St. Mary's Rectory.

⁷⁰ Minute Book, *Records* 4: 345. The number of Catholics buried between 1765 and 1774 alone amounted to 405, most of whom must have been buried at St. Mary's; see Robert Proud, *History of Pennsylvania* 2: 340, Phila., Poulson, 1798.

Graessl, and Keating moved about town day and night, continuously serving the sick of all religions. One after another they fell ill and called Dr. Rush. Fathers Fleming and Graessl died within five days of each other. Father Keating recovered to resume, alone, the care of souls. In the epidemics of 1793, 1797, and 1798, the number of burials totaled 281, 89, and 237, respectively. To cover the shallow graves for reasons of sanitation, a total of fifteen hundred loads of soil were later hauled to the cemetery. This accounts for its present raised level.⁷¹



FIG. 6. St. Mary's church ca. 1830. A rare old lithograph by Kennedy and Lucas from a drawing by W. L. Breton. Courtesy Amer. Cath. Hist. Soc. of Phila.

III. ST. MARY'S AS CATHEDRAL OF A DIOCESE

Shortly after the turn of the century, closed what may be termed the missionary period of the church in Philadelphia. On April 8, 1808, the See of Philadelphia was erected on the division of the original diocese of Baltimore which had embraced the whole United States. Father Michael Egan, a learned and humble Franciscan priest serving at St. Mary's, became bishop-elect and he promptly set about to enlarge the church. It was to become the cathedral of a diocese embracing Pennsylvania, Delaware, and parts of New Jersey.⁷²

In 1809, subscriptions were opened and John Ashley, one of the trustees and president of the Asylum Land Company, pledged \$1,000 toward the building fund. Actual construction did not commence, however, until

the spring of 1810. The plans, drawn up by Charles Johnson, the master carpenter who superintended the work, provided for an enlargement not exceeding twenty feet in length and twenty-two feet in width. What this amounted to is difficult to determine as neither Johnson's plans, nor architectural details of the original structure, appear to have survived.⁷³ Tradition simply speaks of an addition of twenty feet to the front on Fourth Street. Thompson Westcott, writing in 1867, however, says that "the church was enlarged by building an extension to it; and when it was completed the dimensions were one hundred by seventy-one feet." As a result of this enlargement, he adds, "its ancient appearance was much changed." This would suggest practically a new structure; the dimensions given are those of today,⁷⁴ whereas the original site measured fifty by eighty feet. (See p. 203 above.) However that may be, the plan envisaged enough space for an additional thirty-six pews. On April 20, 1811, the minutes of the trustees speak of construction being "in a state of forwardness." A loan of \$2,000 was needed to complete final work, but no person seemed willing to lend money to religious institutions. Finally, on June 22 following, a member of the congregation advanced \$2,500—"from the absolute necessity under which the Board laboured for Money to meet the calls of the Building." The work of construction was completed sometime in late 1811 or early 1812.⁷⁵

Except for two changes, this is the church as we see it from the outside today. The iron railing in front of the church was removed and the rounded bay in the rear, on the west end of the structure, was added in 1886 when St. Mary's was "turned around" and renovated.⁷⁶

It is not known to what extent the interior was affected by the enlargement. The crucifix over the altar which impressed John Adams in 1774, was replaced at

⁷³ A search at St. Mary's Rectory failed to reveal them; and Father Bartholomew F. Fair of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia, whose help has been most valuable in gathering the data for this account, assured the writer that they were not in the Society's extensive collections. Correspondence with the archivists of the Cathedral Archives in Baltimore and the University Archives of the University of Notre Dame proved equally fruitless.

⁷⁴ Actual present dimensions are seventy-one feet seven inches by one hundred and ten feet ten inches, the extra ten feet of the length representing the bay of the chancel which was added to the west end in 1886. Earliest mention of the dimensions of the enlarged church is in *Philadelphia in 1824*, 47, Phila., Carey and Lea, 1824. They are given as one-hundred feet by seventy-one feet.

⁷⁵ Minute Book, *Records* 4: 406-440; *Researches* 7: 92, 1890, 17: 169 and 18: 5, 1901; Westcott, *Hist. of Phila.* [Stauffer coll., Hist. Soc. of Pa.] 4: chap. DLXI. Some time in 1812 or 1813 an iron railing and gate were added to the front of the church; see Minute Book [1811-1821], *Records* 42 (3): 208-210, 227, 1931.

⁷⁶ Griffin, Bishop Conwell, *Records* 28: 345; Nolan, *op.cit.*, 140.

⁷¹ Select and Common Council, *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Committee*, 244, Phila., published by the City of Phila., 1848; Jackson, Joseph, *Catholic burial grounds in Philadelphia*, *Records* 56: 73, 1945; Middleton, *Interments in St. Mary's Burying Ground*, *ibid.* 5: 25-27; Middleton, *Burial of Catholics who died of Yellow Fever in Philadelphia in 1798*, *ibid.* 23: 129-132, 1912; *Researches* [N.S.] 7: 239-241, 1911; J. H. Powell, *Bring out your dead*, 237-239, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1949.

⁷² Shea, *op. cit.* 3: 206-211.



FIG. 7. St. Mary's Church today. National Park Service Photo.

this time by one carved especially for St. Mary's by William Rush, the sculptor. The number of pews was of course increased and the arrangement changed, providing three aisles instead of two. The windows remained plain, as before.⁷⁷

Other changes prior to 1850 of which there is record included a new baptismal font in 1821. In 1836 the sum of \$275 was authorized for a new chandelier, and the pulpit was moved from the Gospel to the Epistle side of the cathedral. Erection of the episcopal chair on the Gospel side made necessary the transfer of the pulpit. The sanctuary was enlarged at this time. A new organ was acquired in 1839. The organ was built in New York and its front was designed by Thomas U. Walter, the architect. It cost in the neighborhood of \$4,000. During the troubles of the 1820's, when the trustee party in control of St. Mary's decided to "pack the pewholders" for electioneering purposes, twenty-six additional pews were put in the cathedral.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Pewholders were permitted to put up blinds near their pews at their own expense provided these conformed with those on the upper windows. *Minute Book, Records* 4: 434 and *ibid.* 42 (3): 209, 1931; Griffin, *Story of St. Mary's, Researches* 10: 61.

⁷⁸ *Minute Book, Records* 43 (4): 356; *Minute Book* [Ms. at St. Mary's Rectory], entries for May 11, March 7, July 2, and December 4, 1838, and February 4, 1839; Griffin, *Bishop*

The most important interior change occurred in 1886 when in the course of renovating St. Mary's, the altar was moved from the east to the west end of the church.

In 1834 a furnace was installed "for warming the church." This may be one of the earliest uses of central heating recorded in Philadelphia. Coal may have been used for fuel, although the earliest evidence of it is for 1840. Finally, as another modern innovation, gas lighting was introduced in 1839 or 1840. The firm of Whelan and Brown installed fifty-six burners at a cost of \$445.⁷⁹

The enlargement of St. Mary's marked the beginning of dissension between the Bishop and the lay trustees of the Cathedral which lasted some twenty years. The story of that struggle, particularly the so-called "Hogan Schism" of 1820-1829, forms an important part of the history of St. Mary's during that period.⁸⁰ The Cathedral was interdicted for a time and St. Joseph's became the pro-cathedral. On the morning of April 9, 1822, with rival factions of the congregation gathered to elect trustees for the ensuing year, a fight broke out which resulted in considerable damage to church property.⁸¹

The Schism ended some time following the appointment of a bishop-coadjutor to the Philadelphia Diocese in 1830. Bishop Francis Patrick Kenrick, a young man of uncommon energy and administrative ability, interdicted the cathedral in 1831 for the second time and forced the dissident trustees to yield.⁸²

Ecclesiastically the highwater mark in the history of St. Mary's, and a milestone in that of the Philadelphia Diocese, was the convocation of the first diocesan synod at the old cathedral in 1832.⁸³ Thereafter, however, the venerable church declined in importance. For one thing, with the achievement of separate parish status by Old St. Joseph's in 1833, many of St. Mary's former flock which had moved over to the old church during the long struggle, did not return.

Accelerating the decline were the twin factors of the shift of population away from the old city area, and the creation of new parishes with larger churches in the newer areas to accommodate the rapidly increasing Catholic community. By 1838 the recently completed St. John the Evangelist on Thirteenth Street became the pro-cathedral, and Bishop Kenrick transferred his

Conwell, *Records* 25: 217-218, 248, 1914; letter of Bishop Kenrick to Rev. Dr. Purcell, Oct. 28, 1836, *Researches* 12: 149, 1895.

⁷⁹ *Minute Book* [Ms.], entries for March 20, 1834, November 4, 1839, and September 7, 1840.

⁸⁰ For excellent treatments of the subject, see Nolan, *op. cit.*; Tourscher, Francis E., *The Hogan Schism and trustee troubles*, Phila., Peter Reilly, 1930; and Griffin, *Life of Bishop Conwell, Records* 24 (March 1913, continued serially).

⁸¹ Griffin, *Bishop Conwell, Records* 25: 302-311; *Minute Book, ibid.* 49 (3): 250, 1938; Tourscher, *op. cit.*, 83-84.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 183-186; Nolan, *op. cit.*, 119, 140-141, *et passim*; *Minute Book* [Ms.], entries for April through May 28, 1831.

⁸³ Nolan, *op. cit.*, 140-141.

residence to the new rectory; and in 1846, the cornerstone for the permanent Cathedral, SS. Peter and Paul, was laid.⁸⁴

St. Mary's reverted to the status of a parish church. But she was no longer, as in the 1820's, "the largest and richest congregation in the United States."⁸⁵ The congregation had become smaller and many of the pews in the church could not be rented.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 221, 280, and 366; *Diary and visitation record of Bishop Kenrick*, 156, 240.

⁸⁵ Nolan, *op. cit.*, 69, citing Kirlin, *Catholicity in Philadelphia*, 232.

⁸⁶ Minute Book [Ms.], entry for November 10, 1843.

But if her days of greatest importance are past, old St. Mary's together with St. Joseph's, the "Mother" church of American Catholicism, deserves to be remembered. Ecclesiastically, they were the pioneer churches of the great Archdiocese of Philadelphia, and their importance in the development of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States was considerable. More generally speaking, their part as testing grounds in the establishment of religious freedom in the United States as well as their significant associations with men and events of the Revolution, have earned for them a right to consideration as among the most historic neighbors of Independence Hall in Old Philadelphia.

QUAKER LANDMARKS IN EARLY PHILADELPHIA

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A DELEGATE to the Constitutional Convention, which met in Philadelphia throughout the summer of 1787, who was curious about Quakers, could have walked easily to any one of five meetings for worship on Sunday or First Day, as it was called. During the years in which the thirteen states obtained their independence from Britain, and experimented with one frame of government before adopting the constitution, there were more Friends' meeting houses in old Philadelphia than at any time before or afterwards.

With the coming of the nineteenth century the beautiful colonial town became much more of a commercial center, which drove city dwellers to seek peace and quiet in the surrounding countryside. As a result, the old meeting houses were closed, the property sold, and new ones were erected nearer the residences of the members. Thus, nearly all of the eighteenth-century Quaker buildings had been destroyed or turned to other purposes before the time of the Civil War.

The most important meeting house in the late eighteenth century was located at Second and Market Streets, and it was called the Greater or Market Street Meeting House, because when it was constructed it replaced a building known as the Great Meeting House [E, III]. Near Independence Square, on the corner of Fourth and Chestnut Streets, was the Fourth Street Meeting House, built alongside the Friends' School [D, IV]. Farther south, on Pine near Second, was the so-called Pine Street or Hill meeting, located on Society Hill [F, VII]. The oldest meeting house standing at that time was on Front above Arch, the Second Bank Meeting House, so named because it was near the bank of the Delaware. These four meetings were all a part of Philadelphia Monthly Meeting of Friends. The fifth meeting place for Quakers had no connection with the others. It was the Free Quaker Meeting House, which stood at the corner of Fifth and Arch Streets [B, I], and was built in 1783 by the Friends who were disowned by the main body for joining the side of the patriots in the American Revolution. The only Friends' building which is used today as a place for worship in the old part of Philadelphia, at Fourth and Arch, was not built until 1804 [D, II].

FIRST MET IN HOMES

The Society of Friends, which had its inception three centuries ago, largely as a result of the inspired leadership of George Fox, was in the full vigor of its youth when Philadelphia was founded in 1682, thirty years later. Quakers, as they were called in derision, numbered 60,000 in England, and missionaries had been successful in making converts both on the continent of Europe, and in several English colonies, while West

Jersey had become virtually a Quaker settlement during the immigration of the previous five years. A few of these Quaker colonists crossed over the Delaware from Jersey and took up land in what became Pennsylvania. Some of these settlers held meetings for worship in the home of Thomas and Elizabeth Kinsey Fairman, at Shackamaxon, the site of the famed Treaty Elm, which made it the first meeting place for Quakers in the vicinity of Philadelphia. When William Penn and his fellow religionists arrived from England in 1682, the Proprietor took up his abode in the Fairman home, and it continued to be one of the meeting places for Friends.

Richard Townsend, who accompanied Penn on the *Welcome*, recorded,

Our first concern was to keep up and maintain our religious Worship, and in order thereto, we had several meetings in the houses of the inhabitants; and one boarded meeting house was set up where the city was to be (near Delaware;) and as we had nothing but love and goodwill in our hearts, one to another, we had very comfortable meetings from time to time.¹

Some students of early Philadelphia believe that the first public meeting house was located below Market on Front Street, and a plaque has been erected in that vicinity.

BANK MEETING HOUSE

There is little doubt, however, that the first building constructed solely as a place for meetings for worship was the Bank Meeting House, located on the west side of Front Street, north of Arch. A subscription of £60 was raised among Friends, while others donated materials or labor, and the structure was completed in 1684.² It was a wooden building which decayed badly within a few years, and was shored up and repaired several times before being removed in 1698.

This meeting house was the most important one in the city for thirteen years. The annual meeting of Friends in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware, called the Yearly Meeting, was sometimes held in this building. The provincial Assembly met within its walls on several occasions. At the time of the Keithian Schism in 1692, it was the center of the debate and conflict. George Keith, a Scotsman who served for a time as schoolmaster in the town, was a spiritual leader among Friends. He criticized the Quakers who held

¹ Smith, Samuel, *The history of the Province of Pennsylvania, The Register of Pennsylvania*, ed. by Samuel Hazard, 6: 198, 1830.

² Vaux, George, *Centre Square and the Bank Meeting Houses, Philadelphia, The Friend* 62: 99, 100, 109, 110, 1889. See, John T. Faris, *Old churches and meeting houses in and around Philadelphia*, Phila., Lippincott, 1926.

political office, and strongly implied that participation in government was not consistent with true Quakerism. Further, he denounced certain church leaders for holding heretical beliefs. The conflict in the Bank Meeting House reached a climax when the followers of Keith erected a second gallery in the back of the room for worship in the meeting house, and while one Friend spoke to the meeting from one gallery, Keith challenged him from the other. This intolerable situation was halted when rival groups entered the meeting house with axes and demolished both the old and the new galleries.³ Later the Keithians, or, as they called themselves, the Christian Quakers, built their own meeting house at the southwest corner of Second and Arch Streets; a wooden structure, large enough to seat one hundred persons, it disappeared early in the eighteenth century.



FIG. 1. Second Bank Meeting House. Front street, west side, north of Arch. Built in 1702, with materials from the old Centre Meeting House.*

In the meantime, a second meeting house had been constructed near what is now City Hall Square. Originally Philadelphia was to be settled on the east bank of the Schuylkill as well as the west bank of the Delaware, and it was expected that the town would rapidly fill in the space between. For that reason, it was considered appropriate to build a meeting house in what was called Centre Square, for the convenience of all. Plans were drawn up in 1684, money was contributed by Friends in several meetings in Pennsylvania, and by 1687 a brick building, forty by sixty feet in its dimensions, was nearly completed and ready for use. It was apparent, however, by the time that it was occupied, that Philadelphia

was not going to develop across the neck of land between the two rivers, for nearly everyone settled along the bank of the larger stream, and even then it scarcely extended beyond Fourth Street. This meant that the brick meeting house was out in the forest far from town, and it was never used as much as the building down on Front Street. The Quakers sold it in 1700 to William Penn for £100, while he was in the colony for his second visit, and then the following year persuaded him to return it to them in order that they might dismantle it, and use the materials to erect a new structure on the lot left vacant by the removal of the first Bank Meeting House.⁴ The building was assembled in 1702 and the Second Bank Meeting House was used until 1791, when it was closed, and the members began attending a new meeting on Key's Alley.

GREAT MEETING HOUSE

Friends came into Pennsylvania by the thousands during the first two decades, and a third meeting house was erected before the turn of the century. Land was purchased in 1695 from William Markham, the Deputy Governor, on the southwest corner of Market and Second Streets, and more land was added afterwards. The Quakers discovered later, to their chagrin, that neither Markham nor the other persons who deeded the land to them held a valid title, and a new patent was obtained from the Proprietor in exchange for a token payment of £40. Construction began in 1696 on a building fifty feet square, at a cost of approximately £1,000. A youths' gallery was added in 1699, and it was called the Great Meeting House, for it was the largest meeting place for Friends for half a century.

None of the buildings erected in the seventeenth century had the external appearance which is considered typical today. They all had roofs sloping up on all four sides, and looked more like dwelling houses than meeting houses. Old pictures of the meeting house at Merion, which may date back to 1695, indicate that it too bore no resemblance to the later traditional style of architecture. Many meeting houses in England today have the appearance of dwellings. The early Friends denounced conventional church buildings. George Fox referred to them in a disparaging way as "steeple houses," and the trend towards a distinctive appearance of meeting houses would surely have drawn censure. Fortunately for the aesthetic senses of posterity, the spiritual qualms of the first generation of Quakers were ignored by future generations.

⁴ Friends have long pointed with pride to the fact that their ancestors first sold the Centre Meeting House to Penn, and then persuaded him to return it to them gratis. Any one who is thoroughly familiar with Penn's financial situation at this period of his career would strongly suspect that although the Proprietor promised to pay £100 for the meeting house, he never had the money to consummate the bargain, and thus the return of the building to Philadelphia Friends does not represent as sharp a dealing by the Quakers as has been claimed.

³ Kirby, Ethyn Williams, *George Keith (1638-1716)*, 86, 87, N. Y., Appleton-Century, 1942.

* Figures 5, 6, furnished through the courtesy of Samuel P. Wetherill. Remainder, the Quaker Collection, Haverford College Library, Anna B. Hewitt, Assistant Curator.



FIG. 2. Greater Meeting House. Southwest corner of Market and Second Streets. The Court House is at the right, with the market stalls in the rear, extending up the middle of Market Street.

The first meeting house in old Philadelphia which followed the traditional style was the Greater Meeting House, built in 1755 to replace the building at Second and Market Streets, but there are earlier examples of the new mode in the surrounding counties. It was a brick structure, seventy-three feet long, and fifty-five feet wide, erected at a cost of £2,146. Apparently it looked much like the building at 20 South Twelfth Street, which houses the American Friends Service Committee, for when it was dismantled early in the nineteenth century, the materials were used to build the new meeting house in what was then West Philadelphia.

TROOPS QUARTERED IN THE MEETING HOUSE

This building was at the center of Philadelphia Quakerdom for fifty years, until the new and larger structure was erected on Arch Street in 1804. John Woolman, Anthony Benezet, William Savery, Israel Pemberton, and thousands of others attended meetings in this edifice. It stood there during the harrowing days of the American Revolution, and in 1776 troops from Maryland were bivouacked within its walls, under the command of William Smallwood. The soldiers were assigned to these quarters despite the opposition of the Quakers, who then protested to the officer in command, and notified him that Friends would appear for meeting for worship at the usual time, despite the presence of the troops. Some of the men attended the religious service, although most of them withdrew to leave the main room to the worshippers.⁵

Two other meeting houses were erected before the Revolution. The building on Society Hill, at Second and Pine, was raised in 1753, on land bequeathed to Friends by the younger Samuel Powel and was used until the building of the Orange Street Meeting House in 1832, on Orange off Washington Square. The so-called Fourth Street Meeting House, which was constructed alongside the Friends' School near Chestnut in

⁵ Vaux, George, *The Great Meeting House*, *The Friend* 62: 147, 148, 1889.

1763, was placed in that location to benefit the students and to provide a meeting place for a Quarterly Meeting of the young people of the Society. It was removed in 1859.⁶

FREE QUAKERS

When the conflict between the colonials and the British crown reached a fever pitch in 1775, and armed clashes led to the outbreak of war, the Society of Friends, long known for its resistance to the use of force, and its opposition to war and revolution, refused to join the patriots' cause. The Quakers took the position that although they denounced the actions of the King, they did not feel justified in engaging in rebellion against him. Isaac Sharpless wrote, "In one sense they were loyalists . . . but they were innocuous loyalists; they were neither spies on American movements nor did they flee for protection to British headquarters."⁷ Some Quakers became Tories, and many others joined the American cause. The Society of Friends disowned both groups without any evidence of partiality. The

⁶ *The Friends' Meeting-House Fourth and Arch Streets Philadelphia*, 20-23, Phila., Winston, 1904.

⁷ *A Quaker experiment in government* 2: 137, Phila., Ferris & Leach, 1902.



FIG. 3. Pine Street Meeting House. Between Second and Front Streets on the south side of Pine. First used in 1753, it was also called the Hill meeting, because of its location on Society Hill.

men and women who fought for American freedom considered themselves to be Quakers even though no longer in a proper relationship with the main group. For a time they held meetings for worship in private homes, but decided that they should erect a meeting house of their own. Land was secured on the southwest corner of Fifth and Arch Streets, and a public subscription was started. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, and other important persons contributed to the fund, and the Free Quaker Meeting House was erected in 1783. A marble tablet was inserted in the gable of the building which bore the following inscription:

By General Subscription
For the Free Quakers, erected,
In the year of our Lord, 1783,
Of the Empire 8.



FIG. 4. Meeting House and Friends School. Southeast corner of Fourth and Chestnut Streets. Although the school building was constructed earlier, the meeting house was finished in 1763.

It is said that when a member was questioned about the reference to the year "of the Empire 8," he answered, "I tell thee, Friend, it is because our country is destined to be the great empire over all this world."⁸

LACKED ALL ADORNMENT

Although these five meeting houses did not look alike on the outside, internally they bore a great resemblance to one another. They were not like the conventional church of the eighteenth century; there were no stained-glass windows, pictures of the saints, beautiful candelabras, carved woodwork, choir lofts, pulpits, or musical instruments. The Quakers believed that they came together to hear the voice of God, to commune with Him, and that any extraneous influence would prevent them from reaching accord with their Heavenly Father. Thus, they felt that music, art objects, and such aids to

⁸ Wetherill, Charles, *History of the Religious Society of Friends called by some the Free Quakers*, 39, Phila., 1894.



FIG. 5. Free Quaker Meeting House. Southwest corner of Fifth and Arch Streets. Erected by Friends who were disowned by the parent body for joining the patriots' cause in the American Revolution, this building was long the home of the Apprentice's Library.

worship as were used by other denominations, detracted from their worship of God instead of assisting it.

Their meeting rooms were very plain, with insufficient light coming in through the small windows. The only furniture consisted of rude pine benches, often with backs, but sometimes even this aid to comfort was lacking. Most of the benches faced one direction, but a few benches were opposite the others. These were often slightly elevated, and were called the gallery or facing benches. Men and women whose gift in the ministry had been recognized by their fellow religionists sat upon the facing benches, but they did not necessarily speak, and not infrequently those who felt led of the Spirit to deliver a message stood up quietly in the body of the meeting. Often the number of seats available in the meeting house was enlarged by the construction of a youths' gallery, either in the back of the room, or sometimes along the two sides of the room as well. Older

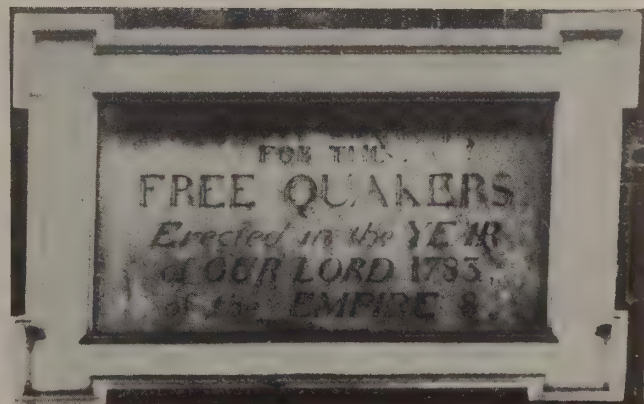


FIG. 6. A close-up view of the marble tablet located in the gable of the Free Quaker Meeting House.

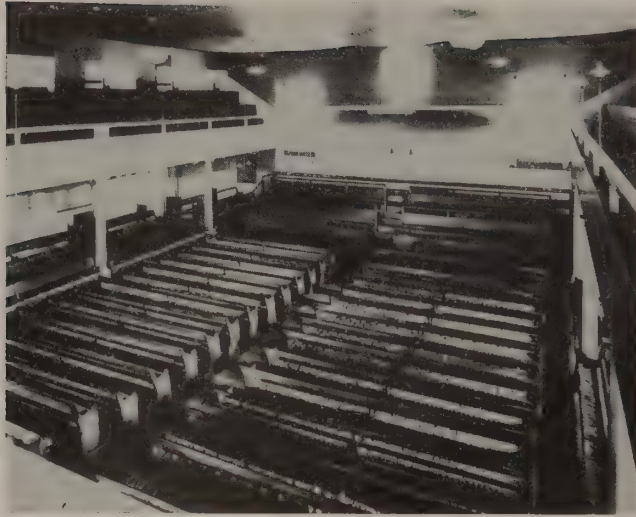


FIG. 7. Interior of the Arch Street Meeting House. This is the only meeting house in the old section of the city, which is presently used for worship, and one of the Philadelphia Yearly Meetings holds its sessions in this room. Note the facing benches, and the youths' galleries, which may be seen on either side of the room.

Friends sat among the younger members to insure that they maintained the proper attitude and did not detract from the worshipful silence.

ARCH STREET MEETING HOUSE

The meeting house which is most familiar to visitors of old Philadelphia in the twentieth century is the one located at Fourth and Arch Streets. The plot of land

upon which that building is located was used as a burial ground for more than a century. The property was granted to Philadelphia Quakers in 1701 by William Penn, during his second visit to the colony, "for a burying place," but it had been used for that purpose for several years before that date. Friends' desire for simplicity extended even to such matters as gravestones, and the placing of any marker over graves was frowned upon. In 1731 one grave digger was warned that he would lose his job if he did not in the future "prevent the setting up such marks of distinction."⁹ Years later, when the ground was leveled, many markers were found buried under ground. These were gathered together, a deep hole was dug, and they were unceremoniously dumped in together. Thousands of persons were buried in this ground, Friends and non-Friends, especially at such times as the period of the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, and the ground had sometimes been referred to as the Westminster Abbey of Pennsylvania Quakerdom.

It was announced in 1794 that there was very little room left for graves, even though the graves were two and three deep in some places, and Friends began to look for a new burial ground. As early as 1738 there had been talk of building a new and larger meeting house on this plot, and agitation began anew in 1796. By the year 1803 it was decided to tear down the meeting house at Second and Market, sell the land, and use the proceeds to begin a new building on Arch Street. Friends decided to construct a meeting house with two large wings, one of which could be used for the Yearly

⁹ Vaux, George, The burial ground and buildings at Arch and Fourth Streets, *The Friend* 63: 194, 202, 203, 1890.



FIG. 8. Arch Street Meeting House, between Third and Fourth Streets. Erected in 1804, this building is located upon the old Friends' Burial Ground.

Meeting of the women, and the other for the men, as the two sexes met separately for their business sessions. Formerly, when Yearly Meeting was held, the men met in one meeting house in town, and the women in another, which necessitated great delay when communications were carried back and forth between the two bodies.

Construction of the central part of the present building began in 1803, and the east wing was completed in time for the women to hold their annual session there in 1805, with more than 1,600 in attendance. When the western end was ready for occupancy in 1811, it was turned over to the women, and the men moved into the eastern wing. The entire structure cost more than \$40,000, much of which was paid for out of the sale of the valuable location on Market Street which netted Friends \$76,000. At the present time, meetings for worship and business are held in the central part of the building during the year, and the west wing, which is



FIG. 9. The yard of the Arch Street meeting, with the steeple of Christ's Church in the background.

larger than the older section, is used when a large meeting room is required, as at Yearly Meeting time.

CHERRY STREET MEETING HOUSE

One further meeting house remains to be mentioned, the one located on the north side of Cherry Street, between Fourth and Fifth [C, I]. This was the first and only Hicksite meeting house in the old part of Philadelphia. Friends have suffered from many schisms during the three centuries of their history. When a religious group is founded upon the principle of direct revelation of the Will of God to each member, it is to be expected that men will occasionally have differences of opinion about the Divine Will. The Keithian Schism and the difference of opinion over the American Revolution have already been mentioned. In the 1820's another division within the Society of Friends took place, and it was the most tragic of all. This is not the place to



FIG. 10. Cherry Street Meeting House. On the north side of Cherry, between Fourth and Fifth Streets. Built in sixty-six days in the winter of 1827-1828 it was an early tangible result of the Separation.

attempt to explain why the split came, but it can be said that there were doctrinal differences, there was a geographical-economic conflict between the rural and urban Friends, and the question of the responsibility of Friends for their fellow men entered into the division. Elias Hicks, a Long Island Friend, has been labelled as the leader of the group which split off, and the dissident group were called Hicksites.¹⁰ In Philadelphia the separation came in 1827, and the new group, which wanted a place in which to meet as soon as possible, built the new meeting house on Cherry Street in sixty-six days. It was used for a number of years, but was eventually replaced by the large meeting house which Friends started to build in 1856 on a lot lying between Cherry and Race Streets, west of Fifteenth, and known as the Race Street Meeting House.¹¹

¹⁰ At the present time this group of Quakers are referred to as General Conference Friends, because the various Yearly Meetings have formed a body named the Friends General Conference. For a recent discussion of the Separation, see Elbert Russell, *The history of Quakerism*, N. Y., Macmillan, 1942.

¹¹ Michener, Ezra, *A retrospect of early Quakerism*, Phila., T. Ellwood Zell, 1860.



FIG. 11. Friends' Almshouse. This building was constructed in 1729, on land located between Third and Fourth Streets, on the south side of Walnut.



FIG. 12. One of the eight cottages which were erected upon the land bequeathed by John Martin for charitable purposes.

FRIENDS' ALMSHOUSE

To mention the Friends' Almshouse in an article about old meeting houses of Philadelphia is not as incongruous as it seems at first glance. Friends have always felt compelled to express their love of God by showing compassion for their fellow men. Their belief that all men are children of God has been dramatically evidenced in their treatment of Indians, opposition to slavery, interest in penal reform, and opposition to war, among others. Within the Society of Friends the more fortunate have always cared for those in need. Widows were supported, orphans provided with homes and taught a trade, and the sick were visited and offered material assistance. Thus, when John Martin, in 1702, willed his property on Walnut Street, east of Fourth, to Philadelphia Quakers as a site for a home for elderly Friends without an adequate means of support, he was augmenting the social service program of Friends, and assisting them in fulfilling their responsibilities to the aged.

After Philadelphia Monthly Meeting acquired title to the property on Walnut Street in 1713, several buildings were erected. The most prominent one was the

Friends' Almshouse, facing Walnut, and extending along nearly the entire width of the lot [D, IV]. The courtyard behind it, reaching back to Willing's Alley, was called Walnut Place, and carries that name today. Probably Martin's old cottage was located at the back of the lot, and it inspired the Friends to build seven others, four facing south, and the remainder north. Here aging Friends who were unable to provide for their own support were assisted by the Monthly Meeting.¹²

Apparently many who lived in this home were able to earn at least a part of their expenses by doing various kinds of work. Some women conducted schools for children, and others made molasses candy or similar items to sell. One man was a watchmaker, another a shoemaker, and a third carved buttons out of bone or hard woods. The people who lived in the cottages were respected Friends, and for a time a carriage called for one couple twice a week to carry them to meeting for worship, where both the man and his wife sat upon the facing benches.¹³ Thus it was not an almshouse in the conventional sense of the word.

In 1841 the main building was torn down and an office building was raised in its place, but the last of the cottages remained until 1876. The Friends' Almshouse was made most famous as the traditional meeting place of the hero and heroine of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *Evangeline*, at the moment when death overtook Gabriel.¹⁴ Friends liquidated their interest in the property in 1924, when it was sold to an insurance company.

¹² Forsythe, Davis H., Friends' Almshouse in Philadelphia, *Bull. Friends' Hist. Assn.* 16: 16-25, 1927.

¹³ Watson, John F., *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania in the olden time* 1: 427, Phila., Whiting & Thomas, 1856, recorded that during a period when women only were living in the almshouse, that the Catholics next door, at St. Joseph's Church, referred to the property as "the Quakers' Nunnery."

¹⁴ Although Longfellow wrote that the meeting took place in the Friends' Almshouse, he had in mind the Pennsylvania Hospital. Richmond P. Miller, in "The Evangeline story," *Pennsylvania Hospital Bul.* 9 (3), 1951, made a full explanation of the matter. He was given access to documents at the Longfellow home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and also cited a brochure entitled *The origin and development of Longfellow's Evangeline*, by Manning Hawthorne and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Portland, Maine, Dana, 1947, reprinted from the *Papers Bibliog. Soc. Amer.* 41, 1947. While attending the Centennial Exposition in 1876, Longfellow positively identified the Pennsylvania Hospital as the building to which he had referred, although he had used poetic license and labelled it the Friends' Almshouse.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF OLD PHILADELPHIA

REVEREND ALEXANDER MACKIE

President, Presbyterian Ministers' Fund

THE only Presbyterian church still within the boundary of the old City of Philadelphia dating back to days before the Revolution is Old Pine Street. It is more properly called the Third Presbyterian Church and is located on the southerly side of Pine Street just west of Fourth [C, IV]. This church came into being as a result of the farsightedness and missionary zeal of the Rev. Francis Alison, D.D. Fourth and Pine was part of Society Hill, so-called, not because living south of Market Street constituted in these days a birthright membership in the exclusive social circles of America's first city, but because it was a tract originally planned for development by the Free Society of Traders. This corporation with which Penn, among others, was identified devoted itself largely to wishful thinking and promotional exercises of a grandiose type. Speculation in real estate, fishing for whales, mining and manufacturing—all received more or less attention. The result was that before long it collapsed financially.

Among its assets was a small frame warehouse located at the northwest corner of Second and Walnut Streets, popularly called the Barbadoes Store. This building is described as a one and a half story structure with a peaked roof.¹ It was standing as late as 1802.

THE MARKET STREET CHURCH

In the Barbadoes Store, under the supervision of the minister from the pioneer church at Pennypack, Baptists began holding services about 1688. As an act of courtesy nine or ten years later, they permitted a group of Presbyterians to hold services, it is said, on alternate Sundays. Here the First Presbyterian Church began its long career. For some reason or other, the exact details of which have not come down to us, the Baptists moved to the Brew House of Anthony Morris² [E, V] near the drawbridge on Second Street, leaving the Presbyterians in undisputed possession of the Barbadoes Store.

The First Church is said to owe³ its origin to the preaching in 1697 of the redoubtable evangelist Rev. Francis Makemie, although of this there is some doubt. The first settled minister was the Rev. Jedediah Andrews, a graduate of Harvard. Andrews came to Philadelphia in 1698 when he was twenty-four years of age. His death occurred in 1747. Under the leadership of

Andrews, the congregation erected in 1704 a frame church building at the southeast corner of Market Street and Bank Alley [E, III]. The latter street is known also as White Horse Alley and is the second alley as you go towards the Delaware River from Third Street. On the southwest corner of Market Street and Biddle's or Bittle's Alley, which was the first alley, was the far-famed Indian Queen Hotel, one of the early meeting places of the Free Masons. The first Presbytery in America was organized in this frame church in 1705 or 1706.

We have very little in the way of specific information about the original building. From a sketch which has come down to us, the first frame church was not unlike the Barbadoes Store [E, III] in appearance.

The church was called familiarly "Old Buttonwood" from the grove of buttonwood trees with which it was surrounded. The best description of the new or enlarged building which succeeded it is that by Peter Kalm, a Swedish scientist who came to Philadelphia in 1748.

The Old Presbyterian church is not far from the market and on the south side of Market Street. It is of middling size and built in the year 1704, as the inscription on the northern pediment shows. The roof is built almost hemispherical, or at least forms half a hexagon. The building stands north and south, for the Presbyterians are not so particular as other people whether their churches face a certain point of the heavens or not.⁴

The building was enlarged in both 1755 and 1761. In 1793 the church was rebuilt and an imposing structure erected with four Corinthian columns on the Market Street façade. This is the building shown in the well-known etching by Birch.

After considerable controversy the congregation removed to a new building fronting on Washington Square at Seventh and Locust [A, V]. The imposing beauty of the church is well remembered by older Philadelphians and remembered with regret that it was possible that so priceless a treasure should fall into the hands of men who had no greater sense of historic and aesthetic values than to tear it down to make a parking lot. The architect who designed the Washington Square church was John Haviland, an Englishman who attained a measure of world fame as the architect of the Eastern Penitentiary in Philadelphia, popularly known as "Cherry Hill." The resemblance between the two types of structures is, however, no reflection on Presby-

¹ Baker, George D., *Bicentennial celebration of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia*, Phila., Henry B. Ashmead, Printer, 1900. See also Mease, James, M.D., *The picture of Philadelphia*, 206, Phila., B. & T. Kite, 1811.

² Baker, *op. cit. supra*. See also Biddle, Charles, *Autobiography*, 362, Phila., E. Claxton & Co., 1883.

³ Cumings, J. S., *First Presbyterian Church*, 9, 1892.

⁴ *America in 1750—Peter Kalm's travels in North America*, rev. from the original Swedish and ed. by Adolph B. Benson, 1: 22, N. Y., Wilson-Ericson, 1937.



FIG. 1. Market Street Church in 1793. Engraving by Birch. Courtesy of Presbyterian Historical Society.

terianism but is, as is well and frequently said, "purely coincidental."

Back of the Market Street Church, fronting on Bank Alley, was a graveyard. Here was to be a place of sepulcher forever for those who worshipped in Old Buttonwood when they in their time should lie down to rest in the shadow of the church they loved to wait the resurrection morn. Here were brought the bodies of many soldiers and many patriots of Revolutionary days. The removal of the church to Washington Square brought with it an increasing problem as to the graveyards of the church. The church still retained title to the Bank Street burial-grounds. When the Market Street Church was rebuilt in 1793, the congregation decided that no person was to be interred in the ground on Market Street unless a member of the congregation at the time the church was rebuilt.⁵ The resolution, which was adopted because there was very little space for additional graves, states that "the Rev. Dr. Ewing's remains were placed in the ground in Pine Street, because his children could not be buried in the Market Street ground." As time went on, many of the older members became aware of the increasing indifference of the officers of the church to maintaining the burial-ground. On May 6, 1844, John McCauley offered the following resolution:

Whereas considerable excitement has existed among the old members and their descendants respecting the Burial Grounds on Bank Street being appropriated for other uses, and in order to set the subject at rest forever, resolved, that the Trustees be directed to convey the same to five of their members to hold it as a place of burial forever.

The matter was referred in the manner most approved in the Presbyterian Church to a committee, neglected, and ultimately the ground sold. At a later date, the trustees discharged their responsibility to the dead by reintering many of the bodies in the Pine Street burial-

ground in no known order or places and plastering their tombstones up against the rear wall.

This is not all. On February 3, 1896,⁶ it was proposed at a congregational meeting to sell the Pine Street burial-ground also. A tentative price of \$20,000 was set on the property, but the congregation indicated its willingness to sell the ground to the Pine Street Church for \$8,000. In view of the fact that this would entail the care of the graveyard of the First Church, the offer was not accepted. A short time later the sale was authorized, but failed of consummation because of the opposition of patriotic groups in the city.

We have been speaking of the Pine Street burial-ground as if we knew all about it. Captain John Mease, an ancestor of Pierce Butler and, by marriage, of the tempestuous Fanny Kemble, and also of the novelist Owen Wister, bequeathed to the church on his death in 1768 the sum of five hundred pounds for the purchase of a new burying ground. This money the church used in 1786 to buy the Pine Street graveyard, which immediately adjoins the Third Presbyterian Church to the west. Here is buried Dr. John Ewing, Professor of Mathematics in the College of Philadelphia and later the first Provost of the University of the State of Pennsylvania and of its successor, the University of Pennsylvania. Ewing may have had his faults. Benjamin Rush⁷ was very emphatic in that point, and left the Presbyterian Church, he said, because of Ewing. But great and heroic man as Dr. Rush really was, it must be admitted that if he had not left us because of Dr. Ewing, his facile mind would have found some other reason. Whatever the faults of Dr. Ewing might have been (and it must be confessed that as he grew older he, like many of us, became increasingly irascible), Ewing was to an unqualified degree a patriot. There were no prayers said for George III in the Presbyterian Meeting House at Market and Bank Streets after the signing of the Declaration of Independence. That very necessary task was left to the rector of the neighboring Church on Second Street below Arch. There was also no need to caution John Adams against John Ewing. Adams tells us he was cautioned as he rode in the coach to Philadelphia to attend the Continental Congress:

... against two gentlemen particularly; one was Dr. Smith, the provost of the college, who is looking up to Government for an American episcopate, and a pair of lawn sleeves. Soft, polite, insinuating, adulating, sensible, learned, industrious, indefatigable; he has had art enough, and refinement upon art, to make impressions even upon Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Reed.⁸

In the Pine Street graveyard of the First Presbyterian Church is buried also Jared Ingersoll, a member

⁶ Minutes.

⁷ See letter, Benjamin Rush to Ashbel Green, August 11, 1787, in *Letters of Benjamin Rush*, ed. by L. H. Butterfield, 1: 433 *et seq.*, *Mem. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 30, Phila., 1951.

⁸ *The works of John Adams*, ed. by Charles Francis Adams, 2: 358, Boston, Little, Brown & Co., 1850.

⁵ Minutes, First Presbyterian Church, November 5, 1841.

of the Convention which framed the Constitution of the United States, and many another Philadelphia Presbyterian patriot.

What a glorious church the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia used to be! Here worshipped James Wilson, signer of the Declaration of Independence, Charles Thomson, secretary of the Continental Congress, and a veritable host of like-minded haters of British tyranny. Here preached the greatest classical scholar of colonial America—the Rev. Francis Alison, D.D., vice provost and rector of the College, Academy and Charitable School of Philadelphia, subsequently a part



FIG. 2. The Reverend Francis Alison, D.D. Minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Vice-Provost of the College, Academy and Charitable School of Philadelphia, Original Member of the American Philosophical Society. Courtesy of Presbyterian Ministers' Fund.

of the University of Pennsylvania, and founder of America's first life insurance company, "The Corporation for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers," now the Presbyterian Ministers' Fund.

Of John Ewing we have spoken. We must not forget that, in addition to being a preacher, Ewing was a mathematician of renown. His report of the transit of Venus in 1769, observed by him and a committee of distinguished scholars, including the famous Dr. Hugh Williamson, a member of the First Church, from an observatory erected in the yard of Independence Hall, appears in the first volume of *Transactions* of the American Philosophical Society. With Rittenhouse, he ran the

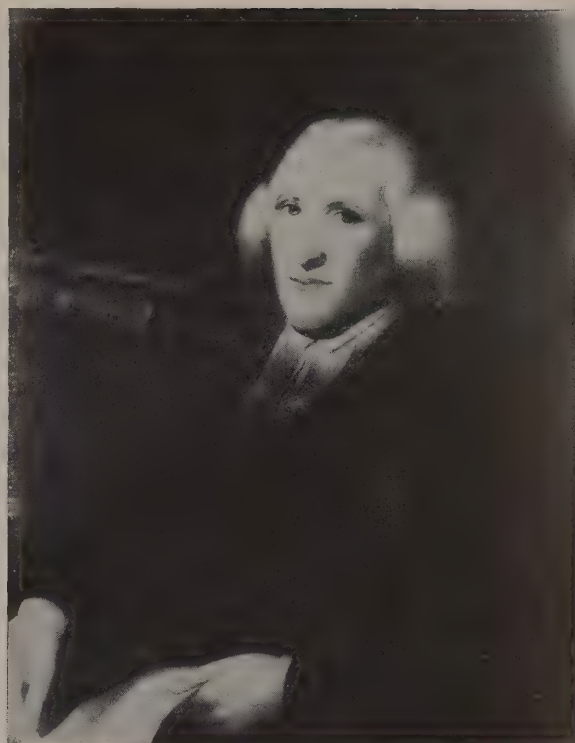


FIG. 3. The Reverend John Ewing, D.D. Minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, Director of the Observation of the Transit of Venus in 1769 in Independence Hall Yard under the auspices of the American Philosophical Society. Portrait by Marchand in the Univ. of Penna.

Mason and Dixon line, and explored alike the earth and the stars.

With Alison and Ewing, among the great pastors of the First Church, belongs the saint and hero Albert Barnes. From a sermon preached at Morristown, New Jersey, by Barnes, the long nose of the Rev. Ashbel Green caught a whiff of heresy. I take the liberty of saying, without any intended aesthetic disrespect, "the long nose" of Dr. Green because of a comment made by the Rev. Stephen Bloomer Balch, an alumnus of the College of New Jersey, who visited in 1813, while Green was president, the scene of his boyhood cultural activities.

He remained there for several days,—being frequently present both in the common dining hall and in the recitation room . . . among the students. . . . Their attention was particularly drawn to him by the *sly humour* which came out both in his language and in his countenance; while the anecdotes in which he abounded, concerning the scenes and incidents of bygone days, called forth peals of laughter, which were heard from one end of the College grounds to the other. In these explosions he himself always joined most heartily; and it was said that Dr. Green, who was then President of the College, and who was more than commonly tenacious in regard to ministerial propriety and dignity, intimating that such loud "horse laughs," as he termed them, would lessen his influence and injure his reputation. To this Dr. Balch replied,—for he afterwards told me the story,



FIG. 4. The Washington Square Church. Courtesy of Presbyterian Hist. Soc.

—that for his own part, he always did love a good “horse laugh”; and that if he (Dr. Green) had indulged himself in that way a little more frequently, he never would have supposed that his own nose was the nozzle of a tea-pot, or that his head was made of glass—alluding to certain imaginings predicated of Dr. G., (whether true or false I know not) at a time when he was suffering under the influence of great nervous depression.⁹

The story of the disruption of the Presbyterian Church in 1838 and the founding of the New School under the leadership of Albert Barnes need not here be recounted. It was the old, old battle which Protestantism has fought again and again—the battle over the Right of Private Judgment. To Albert Barnes and Ezra Stiles Ely, and the men who walked solemnly with them from the Tabernacle in Ranstead Court to the church in Washington Square, American Presbyterianism owes a debt which it must not forget so long as Americans believe in the right of every man to think for himself.

THE ARCH STREET CHURCH

The first fruits of the Wesleyan revival were manifest in America as a result of the preaching of the Rev. George Whitefield. Consecrated to his principles, a

tireless itinerant and laborer in the field of his convictions, and a preacher of great dramatic ability, wandering from Georgia to Massachusetts, Whitefield set on fire the dry underbrush of the religious life of the colonies. As a result of his preaching, there came the Great Awakening and the subsequent division of the Presbyterian Church into New Lights and Old Lights. The fire that swept through the land cleared the ground for a better trained American clergy and for a deeper and more pervasive conviction in matters of religion. But it bred bigotry, intolerance, and spiritual pride.

Whitefield's reception by the conservative clergy in Philadelphia (he came there first in 1739), and the fact that great crowds gathered to hear him preach, resulted in the building by public subscription of the “New Building” on the west side of Fourth Street below Arch, subsequently the first home of the College of Philadelphia.

Here, beginning in 1741, came the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, “a minister impudent and saucy and told the people they were damned.”¹⁰ We have borrowed that statement from one made about Tennent when he preached in Boston. There he followed Whitefield, with whom he was closely associated. In view of the

⁹ Sprague, William B., *Annals of the American pulpit* 3: 413. N. Y., Robert Carter & Bros., 1858.

¹⁰ Quoted from Nicholl's *Literary Anecdotes* in Webster, Richard, *History of the Presbyterian Church in America*, 390, Phila., Joseph M. Wilson, 1857.

fact that he was commonly called "Hell-fire Tennent" by those who did not like his "beastly brayings,"¹¹ it can well be assumed that a considerable part of his preaching in Philadelphia was eschatological.

Gilbert Tennent was an Irish-born Presbyterian preacher, educated by his father, the Rev. William Tennent, also a Presbyterian divine but formerly a priest of the Church of England, in the famous Log College at Neshaminy in Bucks County. He burst into controversial prominence with his famous Nottingham sermon, preached in 1741 on "The Danger of an Unconverted Ministry." It was the sort of sermon which the Rev. Billy Sunday at his most gracious best was wont to preach about his fellow ministers.

Tennent had about him all the fervor and all the stock in trade of the modern evangelist. He wore no wig, let his hair grow long, wore a "kind of great coat drawn round him by a girdle,"¹² and in general tended to violate all the usual sartorial clerical canons.

Tennent's New Light preaching was both sincere and effective. The result was that the Second Presbyterian was organized in due and ancient form in 1743 with one hundred and forty members. Six years later the church purchased a lot on the northwest corner of Arch and Third Streets [D, I]. The lot measured ninety-eight feet six inches on Arch Street and eighty feet on Third. The conveyance was executed by "Dr. Samuel Preston Moore and Mr. Richard Hill."¹³ Here in 1750 the new church building was completed and here the congregation worshipped for eighty-three years. The corner-stone was laid on May 17, 1750. The church is described as "an oblong structure, with the pulpit in the west, with ample galleries on three sides, and with pews which, fifty years ago, were characterized as models of convenience and comfort."¹⁴ Like the First Church, this building also was in the form of a Greek temple with pillars. On the eastern pediment it bore an inscription in Latin in letters of gold: "*Templum Presbyterianum, annuente numine erectum. Anno Dom. MDCCL.*"¹⁵ This stone later was placed, we are told by Watson,¹⁶ at the entrance of the graveyard. There was a steeple on the church, the cost of which was defrayed by the proceeds of a lottery.¹⁷ The sleepers supporting the spire finally decayed, making it necessary ultimately to take it down.¹⁸

The graveyard of the church, originally fifty by three

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Watson, John F., *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania*, etc. 1: 540, Phila., Edwin S. Stuart, 1884.

¹³ Minutes, Second Presbyterian Church (Congregation), February 8, 1749.

¹⁴ Shepherd, Thomas James, *The days that are past*, 42-45, Phila., Lindsay & Blakiston, 1864.

¹⁵ *America in 1750—Peter Kalm's travels, etc., op. cit.* 1: 22-23.

¹⁶ *Op. cit.* 3: 309.

¹⁷ Minutes, Second Presbyterian Church (Congregation), December 29, 1768; March 23, 1770; December 28, 1770.

¹⁸ Minutes, January 19, 1803.



FIG. 5. Arch Street Church in the Days of its Famous Steeple. Engraving by Birch. Courtesy of Presbyterian Hist. Soc.

hundred and six feet,¹⁹ was on the north side of Arch Street, westward from Fifth. Interments had been made at one time in the Academy grounds. According to Watson,²⁰ an infant brother of his grandfather had been interred there.

When the great preacher Gilbert Tennent died, the church went into deep mourning and buried him in the aisle of the church. They buried, a little later, by his side the Rev. Samuel Finley, president of the College of New Jersey, one of Tennent's close New Light friends. Finley had died on a visit to Philadelphia, beloved by all. Because of the extreme heat, it was impossible to carry him to Princeton and bury him there with his predecessors. Instead, a large group of students came down from Princeton to attend the funeral and eight of them acted as pall-bearers. Later, a cenotaph was erected to his memory in the Princeton cemetery. When the trustees of the Second Church "improved" their house of worship at a later date and rented the cellar of the church for a grocery store, the bodies of Tennent and Finley were removed to Fifth and Arch. Still later, when that ground was sold, both bodies were reinterred in the Presbyterian cemetery at Abington.

The church building enlarged in 1809 was sold and torn down in 1837-1838, when the congregation erected "a beautiful marble front church on Seventh Street east side, below Arch. It was opened in July, 1837. This was the second church lighted with gas, Dr. Bethune's, Tenth and Filbert, having been lit the Sunday before."²¹ When the congregation moved again in 1872 to its stone and brick mausoleum at the southeast corner of Walnut and Twenty-first Street, the Seventh Street building was sold for a "variety theater."

Of the ministers of this church in the days of Old Philadelphia, by far the most colorful was Gilbert Ten-

¹⁹ Minutes, *cit. supra*, February 19, 1749.

²⁰ *Op. cit.* 3: 277.

²¹ Watson, *op. cit.* 3: 310.



FIG. 6. Scots Presbyterian Church. Courtesy of Presbyterian Hist. Soc.

nent. Equally well-known was Ashbel Green, to whom we have referred as a heresy hunter in the Barnes case. Green served as president of the College of New Jersey and was the pompous Presbyterian Dr. Johnson of his day. The greatest Christian and best beloved of all the preachers of that church was the Rev. James Sproat, who was called to the church from Guilford, Connecticut, in 1768, preached the gospel as he understood it, and lingered through the yellow fever to stand in succession by the grave of his eldest son, his son's wife, his daughter, and then of his wife, and with head bared to the summer sun to say, "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." There was a great crowd at the funeral of Gilbert Tennent when his tired body was laid to rest, but there was an even greater sense of loss and greater sorrow when the largest company that gathered for the funeral of any victim of the yellow fever met together and a group of negroes who loved him bore all that was mortal of James Sproat to the grave.

One must not forget the distinguished citizens of Philadelphia who worshipped at the Presbyterian Church at Third and Arch. It is difficult to say who of these was first. Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, George Bryan, proponent of the first constitution of Pennsylvania, Elias Boudinot, president of the Continental Congress and president of the United States before Washington, Ebenezer Hazard, first postmaster general, Thomas Leiper, who built the first railway in America, Dr. John Redman, founder of the College of Physicians, Joseph Reed, president of Pennsylvania, Robert Ralston, great ship owner and merchant and prime mover in establishing the Philadelphia Bible Society, and Matthew Bevan, associate of Nicholas Biddle in the Second Bank of the United States and trustee of the Bank when its assets were liquidated—

these all were office holders and worshippers in the Second Presbyterian Church in the days of its *floruit*. No colonial church contributed more leaders in the cause of independence than did the Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia.

The contribution was not without a price. When the members of the church met again on September 24, 1778, "to consult what was necessary to be done,"²² a superficial inventory of the wilful damage wrought by the British showed among other items that the fence of the burying-ground and pews and seats in the church had been destroyed.

But there was a price paid for freedom far greater than fence rails and pews—and the men and women of that day in the Second Church paid it gladly.

Out of the Second Church came several churches at one time of considerable importance. Of these Northern Liberties, the Fifth Church and the Central Church are only memories.

SCOTS CHURCH

At Fourth and Shippen (now Bainbridge) Streets, there once worshipped a congregation of Scotch Presbyterians, known popularly as Seceders and more technically as an Associate Reformed Church. This division in the Presbyterian Church dated back to the early part of the eighteenth century and arose over the question of the right of the patron versus the right of the people to select their minister. This right of the patron was an inherited one and went with the land. In 1733 four ministers,²³ who subsequently were deposed, seceded from the established church and constituted what was called the Associate Presbytery—an organization which grew into a sizable denomination. This denomination was later divided over the question of taking certain oaths. One group, willing to subscribe to the oaths, became the Associate or Burgher Synod. The second group was the General Associate or Anti-Burgher Synod.

Missionaries from the Anti-Burgher Synod were responsible for establishing the Scots Presbyterian Church in the City of Philadelphia. Services were held first in a small farmhouse at Fourth and Shippen Streets by the Rev. David Telfair. The farm itself was used as a burying-ground. A lot was purchased a few years later (1770) on the south side of Spruce Street between Third and Fourth. This lot was part of the ground, extending from Spruce to Pine and from Third to Fourth, known as "Alms House Square," occupied by the Poor House until shortly before Scots Church was built. Here on Spruce Street in 1770 was erected the Scots Presbyterian Church [D, VI]. The building was in the familiar form of a Greek temple, popular with the Presbyterians of that time. The picture shows a row of col-

²² Minutes, *cit. supra*.

²³ Harper, R. D., *The Church memorial, etc.*, 24, Columbus, Ohio, Follett, Foster & Co., 1858.

umns with one large door in the center and two small doors, one to the right and one to the left. There was an iron fence and two steps outside the fence and one within. The church had a cellar which was rented out from time to time. The revenues proved a substantial aid in the difficult church financing of that era. Back of the church in later days was a schoolhouse. A burial-ground adjoined the church.

For several years the church on Spruce Street and the church on Shippen Street were one body. Ultimately, they became separate organizations. When the Rev. William Marshall came from Bucks County to serve as pastor, he preached in both churches. At one time the arrangement provided for morning services at Shippen Street and for all other services at Spruce Street.

During the Revolution the church was subjected to the usual indignities which the British soldiery visited upon Presbyterian churches. The Hessians used the church as a hospital.²⁴ An estimate of the damages done the church was fixed in 1779 as in excess of £5500.²⁵ This included broken church windows, the fence around the burying-ground broken down and taken away, pews destroyed, etc. When, later, the trustees decided to rebuild the damaged pulpit, "It was resolved that a pulpit be built of a sexagon form standing on a pillar with a hanging canopy."²⁶ The repairs to the church extended over several months. On July 22, 1784, it was resolved that the form and expense of the clerk's seat be left to Mr. Marshall and Mr. Kinsey, and on May 19, 1785, it was decided that "the plan to be just what they were when the house was built."

The finances of the church seemed in early days invariably to have been a troublesome matter. In fact, the only period in which the church did not appear to be in acute distress for money was when the famous mathematician Dr. Robert Patterson, as treasurer and later as president of the trustees, managed the business of the church. Dr. Patterson served in due course as school teacher, officer in the Revolutionary Army, professor of mathematics and vice provost of the University of Pennsylvania, treasurer of the Corporation for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers, director of the Mint, and president of the American Philosophical Society. In addition to writing several text books on mathematics, he formulated the first scientifically calculated table of life insurance premiums used in America.

There are other names worth remembering in Scots Church—not the least of which are those of Joseph Nourse, register of the United States Treasury, Silas E. Weir, auctioneer and grandfather of the famous S. Weir Mitchell, and, most colorful of all, Thomas Clyde. What Philadelphia boy of sixty years ago does not remember the *Thomas Clyde* as it steamed up and down

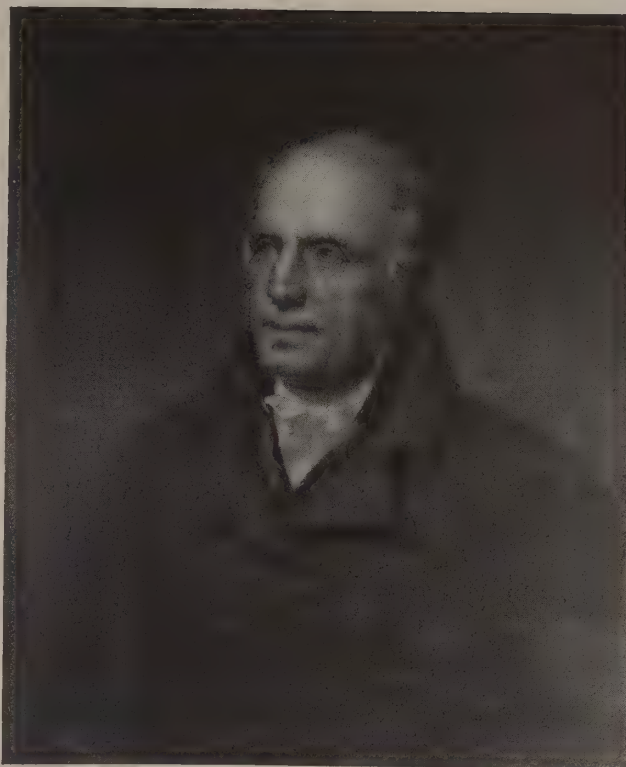


FIG. 7. Robert Patterson, L.L.D. Ruling Elder in Scots Church, Vice-Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, President of the American Philosophical Society. Portrait by Rembrandt Peale in the Hall of the Amer. Philos. Soc. Courtesy of Frick Art Reference Library.

the Delaware in all the majesty of conscious power and beauty? Opposite the Coffee House and located at the southeast corner of Second and Market Streets was the printing shop of Robert Aitken [F, III], president again and again of the trustees of the church, and printer by order of Congress of the first complete Bible printed in English in America.

Broken windows and broken fences were not the only problems facing the trustees of Scots Church at the end of the Revolution. We have referred lightly to financial problems. Though the reference may be made lightly, the problem was acute and painful. The Library Company,²⁷ the First Baptist Church,²⁸ the Bettering House²⁹—for the Scots Church traveled in distinguished and historic company—all threatened suit over unpaid ground rents. Other equally importunate creditors clamored at the doors.

But financial problems paled into insignificance when on May 8, 1786, the congregation adopted a by-law to the effect that "no man (natives excepted) can vote or be elected a member of the Corporation until he presents the Certificate of his having taken the Oath of Allegiance to the State."

²⁷ Minutes, October 7, 1785.

²⁸ Minutes, November 30, 1780.

²⁹ Minutes, April 16, 1821; May 19, 1828.

²⁴ Thompson, John C., *Scots Presbyterian Church, old and new*, 3, Phila., Black, 1887.

²⁵ Minutes, Scots Presbyterian Church (Corporation), December, 1779.

²⁶ Minutes, November 20, 1782.

This was an "Anti-Burgher" church and in Scotland the oath which the Anti-Burghers had refused to take was "Here I protest before God and your Lordships that I profess and allow with all my heart, the true religion presently professed within this realm and authorized by the laws thereof."³⁰ Now it was proposed by Anti-Burghers that Anti-Burghers should take another oath when they had parted company in Scotland with oath-taking Presbyterians. The Rev. Mr. Marshall had been second to none in his loyalty to the American cause through the days of the Revolution. But the matter of oaths was another question. The storm had been long brewing and was long in dying. On May 1, 1779, the record informs us, "Ordered Robert Aitken (elder) to acquaint James and Margaret Scot to Attend the session Monday evening next." And on Monday, May 3, 1779, we read,

appeared James and Margaret Scot who are charged with holding principles inimical to the cause of American Liberty . . . they owned that for some time after the commencement of the dispute with Great Britain, that their difficulties on this head arose from reading *The Hind Let Loose*³¹ and the practice of the Martyrs of Scotland who owned the Government a long time after the exercise of several tyrannical acts and James said he scrupled against taking the test to the States in regard he had been bred in Scotland in strong prejudice against all State oaths as they came in the room of the oath of our Covenantants.³²

In short, they did not believe in taking oaths.

A further problem arose from the fact that the church was by charter subordinate to the Synod of Edinburgh. When the leaders of the Scots Church, eager to break all ties with Great Britain, sponsored an act in the legislature entitled "an act to discharge and annul the declaration of trust relating to the Scots Presbyterian Church in the city of Philadelphia as far as said instrument encumbers the same church with subjection a foreign jurisdiction,"³³ there was considerable storm and wide discussion. The case was settled finally against Mr. Marshall and his adherents on March 2, 1787.³⁴ Previously, on June 26, 1786, the Rev. Mr. Marshall and his adherents had been "purged" from the church by official action of the trustees. The attorneys who won the case for the opponents of Mr. Marshall constituted a formid-

able array of Philadelphia lawyers—Jonathan D. Sergeant, William Bradford, and Joseph McKean.

The high point of the dispute, or the low, if you prefer so to call it, was reached at the annual meeting on May 5, 1787, when Thomas Vowell, John McCulloch, and William Young, the minority trustees, attempted to gain control of the meeting by taking forcibly from the hands of their opponents the tickets which entitled them to vote. Mr. Marshall subsequently formed a congregation which built a church on the north side of Walnut Street between Fourth and Fifth [C, IV].

Battles such as this in Philadelphia Presbyterian churches have proved, it seems, only the stepping stones of their dead selves on which churches have risen to higher things. The Rev. Robert Anan, a chaplain during the Revolution, who was called to succeed Mr. Marshall, entered upon a pastorate of sound theology and great prosperity. The session and the minister reigned as at least coequal with the trustees. And the session was the authority which alone could prescribe the tunes which could be sung in the sanctuary. On one occasion, it is recorded, the solemnity of worship was somewhat disturbed by the Rev. Mr. Anan who, hearing the precentor try to introduce a tune which had not been sanctioned, called out, "What are ye about, mon? None o' yer jigs here, gee us old hundred."³⁵

Mr. Anan was just as reactionary in his social consciousness as in his hymnody. While the great proponents for the abolition of capital punishment in Pennsylvania for minor offences were two Presbyterians, William Bradford and Benjamin Rush, the Rev. Mr. Anan, with elaborate scriptural arguments similar to those advanced by Presbyterian defenders of slavery, replied to a pamphlet written by Rush and defended the *status quo*.³⁶

In 1820 the two small theological seminaries of the Associate Reformed Church consolidated and a new one was established in Philadelphia. The books, records and other papers of this seminary found their way into the custody of the session of Scots Church. When in 1822 the Scots Church withdrew from the Associate Reformed Church and became the Eighth Presbyterian Church, the books still remained in its possession. It was only after protracted litigation that the Associate Reformed Church recovered its library.

The Scots Presbyterian Church was no longer a personality. It was the Eighth Presbyterian Church—only a number.

THE INDEPENDENT TABERNACLE

In January, 1806, a group of Philadelphians, practically all of English origin and for the most part members of the Second Presbyterian Church,³⁷ dedicated an Inde-

³⁰ Harper, *op. cit.*, 24.

³¹ *A Hind Let Loose or An Historical Representation of the Testimonies of the Church of Scotland, etc.*, was written by "Mr. Alexander Shields" (1660 (1661?)–1700), minister of the Gospel in St. Andrews and an associate of the Rev. James Renwick (1662–1688), who suffered martyrdom in the days of persecution. It was a favorite book with Presbyterians who dissented from the Church of Scotland. Shields, who repented having taken a loyalty oath and later abjured it, devoted considerable space in his book to a discussion of the sinfulness of taking oaths.

³² Minutes, Session Scots Church.

³³ Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* 1: 442, Phila., L. H. Everts & Co., 1884. Also Brunhouse, Robert L., *The counter-revolution in Pennsylvania*, 183, Harrisburg, Penna. Hist. Commission, 1942.

³⁴ *Extracts from the diary of Jacob Hiltzheimer*, ed. by Jacob Cox Parsons, 117, Phila., W. F. Fell & Co., 1893.

³⁵ Thompson, *op. cit.*, 10–11.

³⁶ Mease, *op. cit.*, 162.

³⁷ Minutes, Second Presbyterian Church (Congregation), October 4, 1804.

pendent Church which had been organized a short time previously. The Church was governed, as were similar churches in England, by its own congregation and had no ecclesiastical or corporate ties which bound it to any other religious group.

The congregation was incorporated as the Independent Tabernacle, Church and Congregation of the City of Philadelphia. It was variously known as The Independent Tabernacle Church and the Tabernacle Church [C, III]. After a short and stormy period of existence as an Independent Church, the congregation affiliated with the Reformed Dutch Church, popularly known today as the Dutch Reformed Church. From 1816 to 1819 it was known as the Second Reformed Dutch Church. The First Reformed Dutch Church was "in Brown Street"³⁸ and the pastor, the Rev. Jacob Brodhead, D.D. Not long after, a Third Reformed Dutch Church was organized "in Spring Garden."



FIG. 8. The Independent Tabernacle in Ranstead Court.
Courtesy of Presbyterian Hist. Soc.

The reason given for the change in denominational affiliation was stated as the continued difficulty of securing pastors. This was, in reality, the fundamental reason. There were very few Independent preachers available in the neighborhood of Philadelphia, making it necessary to send to England for pastoral leadership. In addition, the first pastor of the Church, the Rev. John Hey, D.D., had proved himself one with some of the wandering preachers and even colonial governors who came to America to avoid their debts and other miscellaneous troubles. The Rev. Dr. Hey seems to have been headstrong, indiscreet, and of a deportment not altogether a credit to the Church. His objectionable conduct persisted to such a degree that it became necessary to suspend him from membership in the congregation. For a time the little congregation was divided, with a

tendency on the part of some of the ladies of the Church to sympathize with the pastor. In addition, for many years the Church labored under a debt and with other financial troubles. Apparently there was never very adequate financial leadership as long as the congregation remained in its original site in Ranstead Court. Although the Church owned property, including a graveyard near the southeast corner of Cherry Street and Schuylkill Fifth Street, estimated to be worth \$40,000, and the debt against it was between \$9,000 and \$10,000,³⁹ there did not seem to be enough financial leadership either in the pulpit or the few to make the Church a going concern. The laymen were busy with problems having to do with the specific form of worship and with supervising the conduct of their fellow members. The preachers kept themselves busy with the niceties of theological distinction. A preacher of today, sometimes discouraged with the personnel of the Protestant pulpit, may well thank God and take courage that not all the ministers of our generation are as appalled at the task of two sermons on Sunday and a midweek discourse and at twenty-five years of age require six weeks vacation and the right to withdraw from the city if the plague should come again. There were indeed in those days giants in the land. But giants were not as numerous or as vigorous as nostalgic memories or wishful thinking of those who love the good old days would make them.

On November 18, 1819, the Church again changed its denominational status and became the Seventh Presbyterian Church. Apparently Presbyterian imagination in those days in the realm of nomenclature never went far beyond a sort of arithmetical progression, duplicated in our time in the unfailing devotion of our solons in Washington to the letters of the English alphabet. Dr. Henry C. McCook, by far the greatest of the ministers of the Church, a scientist, historian and man of God of heroic proportions, restored the historic name of the Church when, on union with the Sixth Presbyterian Church in 1872, the congregation became known as The Tabernacle Presbyterian Church. By that time the Church had moved from Ranstead Court to Broad Street and South Penn Square, next to the United States Mint. Here the Church stood from 1843 to 1873, relocating in the latter year on Chestnut Street at the southwest corner of Thirty-seventh.

But we are thinking about the first building in Ranstead Court and we have said surprisingly little about it. Ranstead Court or Place was a dead end alley between Market and Chestnut Streets, running parallel with those streets and entered from Fourth Street [C, III]. The Bourse Building now covers the site of the Church. At the west end of Ranstead Court was an iron railing in which there was a gate. Through the gate you turned to the right and entered the Church. The property of

³⁸ Records, Tabernacle Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Historical Society), Book A.

³⁹ Preface to Records, Tabernacle Presbyterian Church, Book B.

the Church extended northward to Greenleaf's Alley. A little girl seated in the west gallery where Sunday School teachers sat with their pupils—the boys were in the east gallery—could turn her attention from the dry as dust preaching of the Rev. Samuel D. Blythe or the Rev. William Latta McCalla, or some other preacher of renown, and look out through a north window upon the pleasing vista of the "famed Black Bear Hotel" across Greenleaf's Alley where "in full view hung the larder of the Hotel in the wintry weather and furnished an attractive sight to the child who loved good cheer."⁴⁰

The Church was a brick building, constructed in the years 1805–1806, so Dr. James Mease, Philadelphia's first antiquarian, tells us,

with a great degree of neatness and simplicity. The form of its plan is a parallelogram, terminated at one end by a semi-circle, wherein stand the pulpit and choir. The exterior elevation, presents a range of semi-circular windows below, and a similar range of spacious windows above. The galleries are shallow, and supported entirely from the wall, except that fronting the pulpit which is carried by columns. The pulpit is spacious, on each side of which are desks for the chief singers. The pews below, are one hundred and sixty-two in number, conveniently arranged, with spacious aisles. The whole dimensions of this building from out to out, are sixty by ninety feet.⁴¹

"The pulpit was reached by two gracefully winding stairways. . . ." The three inside aisles were paved with good Philadelphia brick and quite guiltless of such luxurious furnishings as carpet. Connected with the Church was a graveyard, a considerable portion of which extended along Greenleaf Court.

The Church in Ranstead Court was not altogether hospitable to the duty of public service. When Dr. Wistar died, the trustees were asked for permission to use the Church for a memorial service. Dr. Wistar lived only a few doors from the Church. The trustees met on February 23, 1818, to consider the matter.

The President stated that the object of the meeting was in consequence of having received an application from the Committee of the Philosophical Society for the use of this House to deliver an Eulogium [*sic*] on the late Doctor Wistars [*sic*] a motion was made and seconded that the above application be granted and after a mature consideration [*sic*] it was unanimously resolved that agreeably to the Charter of this Church the House cannot be used for other than Religious [*sic*] Purposes.⁴²

By the time the anti-slavery agitation had grown to considerable proportions, the Church had become more civic-minded and opened its doors to a debate between the Rev. John Breckenridge of Baltimore, a leader of the Old School faction of the Presbyterian Church and a proponent of slavery, and Mr. Wright,⁴³ who advo-

cated Abolition and Amalgamation. "The debate lasted five nights and the Old Tabernacle was crowded to overflowing. You can see how far fanaticism ran," wrote a lady of the Old School Presbyterian persuasion, "when Mr. Wright's followers—the merchants' sons of Philadelphia—would come to the meetings with their colored servants on their arms."⁴⁴

Tabernacle Church was the scene of the historic General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1838 at which there occurred the division of the Church into Old School and New School. The Old School stood for the narrow denominationalism of Green, Breckenridge, Junkin, and men of that ilk. To them, theological issues were more important than simple morality and the retaining of authority of greater worth than the spreading of the gospel of the Kingdom of God.



FIG. 9. Old Pine Street Church in 1768. Courtesy of Presbyterian Hist. Soc.

"I was playing," we read in *A Child's Recollections*, which has already been quoted, "in Washington Square and observed a procession of men in somber black garments and with serious faces. They passed quickly by but the child watched them enter into the First Presbyterian Church on Washington Square. A great reform was inaugurated under Albert Barnes the fearless and learned expositor of the Bible."

OLD PINE STREET

We have mentioned the fact that the only pre-Revolutionary Presbyterian Church standing today in Old Philadelphia is the Third Church, known also as Pine Street Church or Old Pine Street. This church was erected in 1768, rebuilt in 1837, and again rebuilt in 1857. Perhaps the fact that the rebuilding of the church took place in each case in a depression year is an indication of the toughness of moral fibre which characterized the most colorful of Old Pine Street's pastors. They

⁴⁰ *A child's recollections of the Old Tabernacle Church, Ranstead Place* (MS. in Presbyterian Historical Society).

⁴¹ Mease, *op. cit.*, 326.

⁴² Trustees Minutes, Tabernacle Presbyterian Church 1: 39.

⁴³ Probably Elizur Wright (1804–1885), anti-slavery advocate, later to attain merited fame for his battle waged in Massachusetts to obtain ethical life insurance laws.

⁴⁴ MS. letter in possession of Presbyterian Historical Society, written by Maria Kennedy Fox.

were among the few Presbyterian ministers in Philadelphia who refused to adopt the easy and popular solution of moving the church to a new neighborhood every time it required courage and backbone to hold the fort. To see Old Pine Street still standing is some comfort to one who reads the story of the First Church, the Second Church and of Scots Church and grows heartsick over a birthright thrown away. The dignity and the beauty of great buildings erected by master workmen and sacred to the memory of the men who were first in the service of America in the times that tried men's souls can come back only to memory. One looks long for the beauty of holiness in the yellow brick, the terra cotta, the thin veneer of stone and the cinder block of many a Philadelphia Presbyterian sanctuary today, and is forced to the conclusion that one may be very sound in theology but considerably deficient in his understanding of what constitutes the true and the lovely.

The original church designed by Robert Smith, the architect of St. Peter's across Fourth Street and of Nassau Hall, was a rectangular brick structure with the hip of the peaked roof running parallel with Fourth Street. Entrance to the church was by a path from Fourth Street leading to two doors in the eastern wall. The pulpit, trimmed with red velvet, was along the west wall. Over the pulpit was a great sounding-board, "and a precentor's desk below, which was slightly raised and shut in by a partition four feet high. A row of twelve pews flanked the pulpit right and left; a broad aisle in front of it with two blocks of pews, thirteen deep. . . . The galleries extended along the north, east, and south sides of the church. . . . The pews were so high that the partitions overtopped the children's heads."⁴⁵ The aisles were paved with brick. The galleries above-mentioned were not in the pre-Revolutionary Church but were a later addition. Special mention must be made of the fact that this church had an unusually efficient sexton, a man named Alison like the great preacher, who kept the church so clean that "the first Board of Trustees ordered a 'neat, comfortable wig to be procured for him.'"⁴⁶

The church as it stands today presents a considerably different picture. Extensive changes were made in 1837 and in 1857. The roof has been raised but apparently kept intact by making the original walls much higher. The large handmade shingles are still in place on the old roof. A second roof, the present, was built over the original. This gave the church a ground floor which could be used for Sunday School and a second floor for the church auditorium. The door opposite Fourth Street door was abandoned and a new entrance constructed from Pine Street. You enter now up a long flight of steps by way of an imposing portico with Corinthian columns such as you see on some of the older



FIG. 10. Old Pine Street Church (after alterations in 1837 and 1857). Courtesy of Presbyterian Hist. Soc.

churches in the South. The church has been transformed, wrote Dr. Brainerd, "into a beautiful and classic temple; uniting the associations of a venerated antiquity with the demands of modern taste."⁴⁷

The church was originally what used to be called a "chapel of ease" for the First Church and was sponsored by it. The First Church prospered greatly under the scholarly and substantial ministry of the Rev. Francis Alison—indeed, to such a degree that it was felt advisable to erect at least a chapel on Society Hill. Through the influence of Chief Justice Allen, the most influential of the many influential members of the First Church and, *facile princeps*, the most substantial man in the Colony, and Thomas and Richard Penn, the successors of their father as the "proprietaryes and Governors-in-Chief of the province of Pennsylvania, and counties of New Castle, Kent and Sussex upon Delaware," a lot of ground at the southwest corner of Pine and Fourth Streets was secured, "to the intent that a Church or Meeting House should be erected thereon, and a burial yard laid out for the use of the said society of Presbyterians forever."⁴⁸ For a brief period services were held in a temporary building. The original church was erected in 1767–1768. The entire cost was provided by the First Church. The Minutes of the Second Church⁴⁹ show that George Bryan, who played an important part in framing the first Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and William Alison appeared before the congregation of the Second Church and presented a letter requesting aid in building the new church and suggesting a collegiate arrangement among the three congregations. The members of the Second Church "were unanimously of Opinion, that the Coalition

⁴⁵ Allen, Richard Howe, The Centennial sermon, in *Leaves from a century plant*, 164–165, ed. by R. H. Allen, Phila., Henry B. Ashmead, 1870.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Brainerd, Thomas, A brief history of Pine Street Church, in *Manual of the Third Presbyterian Church*, 9, Phila., William F. Geddes, Printer, 1859.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3–4.

⁴⁹ July 1, 1765.

proposed did not Appear to them for the Health or Advantage of this Society." Moreover, "steps of such consequence" (*viz.* a lot secured, a temporary house of worship obtained and plans settled for the new building) were taken "without our having any Intimations of your purpose."

For a considerable period the First Church and the Third Church were one corporation and the ministers of the First Church, Dr. Alison and Dr. Ewing, alternated in conducting the services. Further assistance was secured from the Rev. Samuel Aitken.

In 1771 the church extended a call to a young minister, the Rev. George Duffield, who was serving a church in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, then one of the most important frontier settlements of Pennsylvania. Duffield was known already to Alison and Ewing. Had it not been for the fact that in spite of the reunion in 1759 of the Old Side and New Side, or Old Lights and New Lights, as they were called, there still lingered old theological animosities, the choice would have been a happy one and, indeed, so proved. The First Church was Old Light and the Second Church, New Light. The Third Church was paid for by the Old Light Church and now proceeded to call a New Light pastor in the person of Mr. Duffield. Some years previously it had been Duffield who had accompanied the Rev. Charles Beatty in one of the earliest missionary efforts for the Indians undertaken by Presbyterians. The expedition had been financed through funds entrusted to America's first life insurance company—Alison's Corporation for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Presbyterian Ministers. Duffield had come, therefore, directly under Alison's supervision. Beatty and Duffield had gone as far west as the Muskingum River in Ohio. The mission had been characterized by a considerable degree of success.

But Duffield was a New Light. The result was a scene repeated more than once in Presbyterian churches in bygone days. Duffield found the doors of the Pine Street Church locked against him and with assistance and accompanied by friends entered the church. Then occurred the historic scene when Robert Knox, rising in all the might and dignity of a layman in the Presbyterian Kirk, than whom there is indeed none greater even in the Kingdom of Heaven, laid hold upon a minion of the law, Jimmy Bryant by name, a magistrate who had been employed by the First Church. Taking him by the seat of the pants and the scruff of the neck, he ejected him from the sanctuary with "There, take that and begone! And disturb us no more." Then he turned to the preacher and said "Go on, Mr. Duffield"—and Mr. Duffield, who himself was apparently not averse to a fight, went on. The trouble was finally adjusted by a payment by the Third Church to the First Church of \$4,250, after which the two congregations lived in amity.

Duffield was a patriot and a close friend of John Adams, who came frequently to hear him preach. There was no pro-British element in his church. While the

dandies of the British Army and Philadelphia belles, who were willing to accommodate their patriotism to the exigencies of the times and their affections, thronged in and out of St. Peter's Episcopal Church and listened to prayers for Good King George III, who needed them badly enough, British troops tore out the pews of Old Pine Street for firewood, stabled their horses in the sanctuary, and buried in the churchyard unknown and quickly forgotten Hessians who gave their lives to make a Roman holiday for a booby king.

Duffield served in the Revolutionary army and was later one of the chaplains of the Continental Congress when such influential Presbyterians as Charles Thomson was secretary and Elias Boudinot, president of that body. Duffield's body rests beneath a slab in the Third Church and his soul goes marching on.

Old Pine Street has been a church of colorful pastors and usually men with backbone. John Blair Smith, brother of Samuel Stanhope Smith, and president of Hampden Sidney College, succeeded Duffield. Archibald Alexander, the first professor in the Theological Seminary at Princeton and a theologian of renown, served from 1806 to 1812.

After him came Ezra Stiles Ely, whose ministry extended from 1814 to 1835, a gentleman unafraid, a friend of the colored man, a leader in the New School, and a generous benefactor, *inter alia*, of Jefferson Medical College.

Ely was one of the great good men not merely of the Presbyterian Church but of the America of his day. He was so good-looking that you wouldn't take him for a Presbyterian preacher. Ministers like Green and Janeway of the Second Church regarded themselves so seriously and were so austere in appearance that even little children were afraid of them. Ely was apparently a man of substantial means, who took an interest not merely in the academic side of religion but in its practical application. He is said to have come under the influence of Charles G. Finney and the group of men, originating in the Burnt District of New York, who were acutely aware of the implications of what in these days is called "the Social Gospel." His first wife was a relative of General McClellan. He married a second time late in life, leaving a daughter whose rather unusual career is detailed with modern relish in the novel *The Scandalous Mrs. Blackford*.⁵⁰

The election of Dr. Ely to the pastorate resulted in a division in the church. "The four elders and a small minority of the congregation, who opposed his election,"⁵¹ withdrew and formed the Sixth Presbyterian Church, which was located on Spruce Street above Fifth, and built in large part with funds contributed by the Third Church. The Sixth Church was a brick building, described rather fulsomely in the *Evangelical Repository*

⁵⁰ Kane, Harnett T., and Albert Parry, *The scandalous Mrs. Blackford*, N. Y., Messner, 1951.

⁵¹ Allen, *op. cit.*, 175.

for May, 1816, as "An elegant new church . . . it is now confessedly the most complete and most beautiful edifice, for religious worship, in the city, or indeed, as far as our observation has extended, in the United States."

Thomas Brainerd, Ely's successor at Old Pine Street, was one of Philadelphia's anti-slavery leaders, a founder of the Union League Club of Philadelphia, and a prime mover in moulding Union sentiment in Philadelphia in the days of the Civil War. When Brainerd was buried in the graveyard to the east of the church, the whole Union League attended in a body.

It is owing to the courage and self-denial of two of Old Pine Street's later pastors, the Rev. Hughes Oliphant Gibbons, D.D., and the Rev. Clarence Shannon Long, the present incumbent, that the church still stands upon its ancient site.

Much might be said of the men and women who worshipped there. John Adams, signer of the Declaration of Independence, vice president and then president of the United States, was a communicant member. Benjamin Rush, another signer, came often here to church, although later a member of the Second Church. His mother was a communicant member. Dr. William Shippen, Jr., professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, served as a trustee. General John Steele, Colonel William Linnard, Colonel George Latimer, Colonel Robert Knox, of whom we have spoken, Major

General James Potter, who made history at the Battle of Princeton, are among the hosts of Revolutionary heroes who are part of the history of the early days of Old Pine Street.

Much might be said of those who lie buried in the old burying-ground of the church. Here is the grave of William Hurie, who is said to have rung the State House bell on that memorable day in 1776 when the signing of the Declaration of Independence was proclaimed. And not far away lies Mary Nelson, "who in revolutionary times used to test the powder brought to the arsenal by touching off a portion of it with a coal."⁵² These are among the plain folks whose bodies lie here. And there is, too, a great company of the captains and the kings and the gentry—not the least of whom at one time was David Rittenhouse the famous astronomer.

One church alone remains in Old Philadelphia to tell us of the faith and fearless courage that once was Presbyterian. Old Pine Street lingers only because there ever have been in its leadership men and women who refused to truckle to circumstance and to surrender to expediency. The prophetic, immovable faith of the men who designed the seal of that corporation and inscribed on it under a replica of the old brick church the words "Enter while you may" still holds open the doors of an old church for all sorts and conditions of men.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 184.

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH

The Cradle of American Methodism

THE REVEREND BISHOP FRED PIERCE CORSON

Vice President, Association of Methodist Historical Societies

ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, situated on the southeast corner of New and Fourth Streets in Philadelphia, is the oldest church in continuous service in Methodism. Around it the significant events in the establishment of the Methodist Church in America took place. This fact has earned for Old St. George's the title of "the Cradle of American Methodism." The present building erected in 1763 was not the first meeting place of the Methodist group or "class" as such groups were then called. Before St. George's was acquired two other places had been used by Methodists for their meetings. The first was a sail loft on Dock Street, a type of building popular with the early Methodists because the big room re-

Louisburg and Quebec and returning to England in 1764 he came under John Wesley's influence, was converted, became a licensed lay preacher, "sold out of the army" and returned to America as barrack-master in Albany, New York. His work, however, in the Colonies was as preacher and organizer of the Methodist societies.

Captain Webb had a sense of the dramatic and his army career made effective background for its use. He wore a green patch over his right eye which he had lost in the Battle of Quebec. He preached in his red regimentals and had a habit of laying his sword across the Bible. He was, however, a man who preached a helpful and practical doctrine. Wesley said of him, "He is



FIG. 1. Captain Thomas Webb.*

quired for sail-making provided a commodious and spacious place for meeting. (It is said that the owner of the Dock Street building, Samuel Croft, was the Society's first convert.) The second meeting place, acquired because the first was outgrown, was at No. 8 Loxley Court [D, I]. The house still stands.

The group of early Philadelphia Methodists, numbering about one hundred, were actually organized into a society by Captain Thomas Webb. He had been a soldier in the British Army. He saw service at both

* All illustrations in this article obtained through the courtesy of St. George's Church.

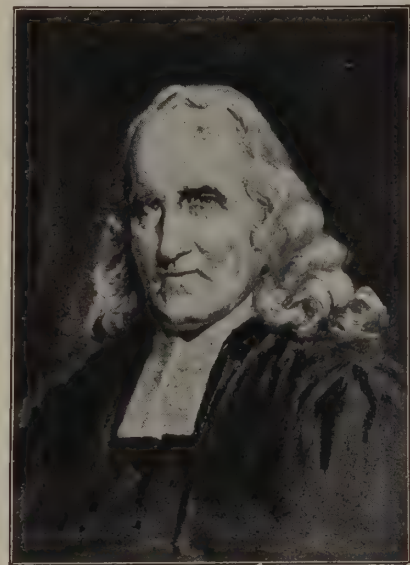


FIG. 2. Joseph Pilmoor.

all life and fire, therefore, although he is not deep or regular, yet many who will not hear a better preacher flock to hear him and many are convinced under his preaching, some justified, a few built up in love." In 1774 John Adams, later President of the United States, heard Webb preach in St. George's and wrote that, "He is one of the most fluent men I have ever heard." Such a man could and did have great influence in establishing the new "sect" called Methodists. In 1767 Captain Webb came to Philadelphia and organized the Methodists into a society. There is evidence that the Methodists had been meeting in groups long before Webb's visit. In fact the Methodist movement began with Whitefield's preaching in Philadelphia in 1739. He,

according to Jesse Lee, a pioneer Methodist leader of outstanding prominence, "opened the way for our preachers to travel and preach the gospel in different parts of the country." But with Webb the unorganized group took form.

Joseph Pilmoor and Richard Boardman arrived in Philadelphia from England on October 24, 1769, and they took charge of the Methodist work in the city. Pilmoor took leadership, however, and under his direction St. George's was acquired. He was a very able man, serving the Methodists here and in Ireland and Scotland. In 1785, after two years in England, he returned to Philadelphia, entered the ministry of the Episcopal Church to which Methodism was attached until 1784, became rector of St. Paul's, the foster-mother of the early Methodists and is buried under the chancel of the church.

the new church which has now grown in the United States to 9,000,000 members, for Methodists their "Independence Hall."

The building, 53 × 82 feet in size, was exactly what the Methodists wanted and its location was ideal. At the time the building was acquired Philadelphia had a population of 30,000. There were 3,318 houses in the city, 18 churches representing 10 denominations and all of them located in the general area of St. George's.

The story of the acquisition of St. George's by the Methodists is both interesting and amusing. The building was begun by the Dutch Presbyterians in 1763 on land acquired from Dr. Shippen. The membership was poor and according to Benjamin Franklin consisted mostly of recent emigrants to America. They were either unwise or untrained in their calculations because they overbuilt and were soon in financial trouble. As



FIG. 3. St. George's Church.

Pilmoor found the accommodations at No. 8 Loxley Court totally inadequate for the growing Methodist group and began to explore the possibilities of larger accommodations.

ST. GEORGE'S ACQUIRED

Pilmoor in his journal records that "several places were mentioned and application made to no purpose." Evidently there was quiet opposition from the ministers of other churches. "At length," he wrote, "we came to an agreement to purchase a very large shell of a church built by the Dutch Presbyterians and left unfinished for want of money." This building became the St. George's, to which Bishop Asbury referred as "the Cathedral of Methodism," the building which means to Methodists on this side of the Atlantic what Wesley's City Road Chapel means to the English Methodists, the cradle of

often happens their troubles piled up on them. They failed to get recognition from the German Reformed Synod and they were turned down by the Church of England. To save the parishioners who had evidently hypothecated their possessions to build the church it was put up at auction and sold for 700 pounds although it had already cost 2,000 pounds. The Methodists did not buy it at the auction but when they did they got it for 650 pounds. Joseph Pilmoor in his Journal preserves the story of this fortunate transaction for the Methodists. "While the public auction was in progress a gentleman's son," wrote Pilmoor, "who was non compos mentis, happened to stop in the auction room and bought it. His father wanted to be off the bargain and could not without proving the insanity of his son. Rather than to attempt this he was willing to lose fifty pounds by the job." "Thus," continued Pilmoor, "the Lord

provided for us, our way was made plain, and we resolved to purchase the place, which we did for 650 pounds." "How wonderful," he concludes, are "the dispensations of Providence. Surely the very hairs of our heads are numbered." The father, however, I suspect, had some thought as to what Providence had neglected to do for his son's head.

November 23, 1769, was therefore a significant date for the Methodist Church for on that day Miles Pennington bought St. George's for the Methodist Church in accordance with the terms of Wesley's deed of trust by which in principle all Methodist property is held. And on November 24, 1769, Joseph Pilmoor dedicated it.

The building at that time was an unfinished shell with only a dirt floor in it. The beautiful and commodious colonial church we now see came by way of loving and industrious hands and sacrificial and devoted hearts.

THE BUILDING

St. George's, as has already been noted, was unfinished when it came into the hands of the Methodists. It was, in fact, a rectangular shell 53 × 82 feet in size made of brick and placed on a good foundation. While the first furnishings were temporary, permanent improvements were soon begun which remain to this day. Fortunately, the fathers took a good church design as their model and particularly in the chancel and pulpit copied closely after those in St. Paul's. The pulpit is unique in its design and location. It has been variously described as a "tub on a post" and as a "watch box with the top sawed off" and "the spiral pulpit." It stands in a spot identical to that in St. Paul's, being on the north side of the sanctuary and twenty feet from the east wall. The pulpit can hold but one person at a time and is approached by "frame steps." It has become a sa-



FIG. 4. Interior of St. George's Church.

The debt upon it and the ground rent were both satisfied by 1802 and the two buildings on New Street which share much of Methodist early history were acquired soon thereafter.

Some may wonder at the name "St. George's," knowing the plainness of the early Methodists and their hesitation to follow the established Church in such matters. The name, however, went with the building and because of the good judgment of Pilmoor and Webb the members of the society did not change it. The Dutch Reformed group had called the church originally "Georg Kirchen" but when they appealed to the Bishop of London to be taken into the Church of England they changed the name to "Saint George's" in honor of the patron saint of England, St. George, who was martyred during the Diocletian persecution in A.D. 303. It was thus that a church destined for such great fame received a name appropriate to its distinction.

cred spot to Methodists because in it Francis Asbury preached his first sermon in America on October 29, 1771. Every Methodist minister coming to Philadelphia naturally desires to stand in the Asbury pulpit. Next came the galleries still in the building and containing "538 feet of seats." Following this improvement in 1792 the slat-back seats were removed and replaced by more comfortable pews. The building was originally lighted by candles and heated by charcoal stoves and footwarmers. These methods of lighting and heating were very inadequate as compared with facilities available today but they served their purpose in providing the means for a strong spiritual work to be carried on in the young and growing city. One of the lessons growing out of these modern times of innumerable gadgets for human comfort is the realization that they do not automatically bring with them a higher quality of personal or corporate life. The candelabras

and the foot-warmers originally used are still to be seen in St. George's. Early in the nineteenth century oil replaced candles as a method of illumination. But when gas lighting was introduced St. George's was one of the first churches to install it and after 1838 the church was lighted by this means.

The basement of Old St. George's, with its picturesque semicircular benches and lesson materials boxes came as the result of demands made for increased Sunday school space and resulted from the "modernization plans" which developed about 1835.

ASBURY AND ST GEORGE'S

For American Methodists, Francis Asbury is the Father of the Church and its Patron Saint. His remarkable life and its influence upon the formation of the American republic deserves careful study by all who would understand the source and nature of the good influences that went into the founding of the country and from which benefits are still being received although the perpetuation of their cause is widely neglected.

Francis Asbury was born in the Parish of Handsworth, four miles from Birmingham, Staffordshire, England, on August 20, 1745. Early in life he came under Methodist influence and at the age of seventeen he began to hold public meetings and "to exhort and preach." By his twenty-first birthday he had become what was and still is "a travelling preacher" in the Methodist connection. When at the Methodist Conference of preachers in Bristol on August 7, 1771, it was proposed to send preachers to America, Mr. Asbury volunteered and was accepted by Mr. Wesley. This occasion, while getting little or no passing notice, was in truth one of the great moments in the history of Methodism and in the founding of the American republic. Out of it came, through the unbelievable leadership of one man, the largest Protestant denomination in the United States and through this man's amazing effort and circuit-riding plan the new country was made aware of the fact that God was the God of the wilderness as well as of the settled places.

On September 4, 1771, Mr. Asbury set sail for America. A passage in his diary written on shipboard affords a revealing explanation of his remarkable accomplishment. On September 12 he wrote in his journal the following: "I will set down a few things that lie on my mind. Whither am I going? To the New World. What to do? To gain honor? No, if I know my own heart. To get money? No, I am going to live to God and to bring others to do so."

After fifty stormy days Asbury reached Philadelphia on Sunday, October 27, 1771. He and his travelling companion, Richard Wright, were directed to the house of Mr. Francis Harris who received them well and took them to church that night to hear Joseph Pilmoor preach. Asbury was impressed by the gracious hospitality of the Philadelphia Methodists and on Monday,

October 28, 1771, Francis Asbury preached his first sermon in America in St. George's Church and from the "spiral pulpit" which has now come to bear his name. Thus was begun a career of unparalleled service to America lasting forty-five years, covering an itinerary of 270,000 miles mostly on horseback through the frontier wilderness, during which he preached 16,900 times, held 225 Annual Conferences and ordained more than 4,000 preachers. Asbury had no home in America. He was an unmarried itinerant preacher. However, he considered Philadelphia his headquarters. Before the church in America was set apart by Wesley and given a plan for its own organization in 1784, Francis Asbury served St. George's as pastor from 1771 to 1774. Why he was not returned as pastor before his consecration as the first Bishop of the Methodist Church at the fa-

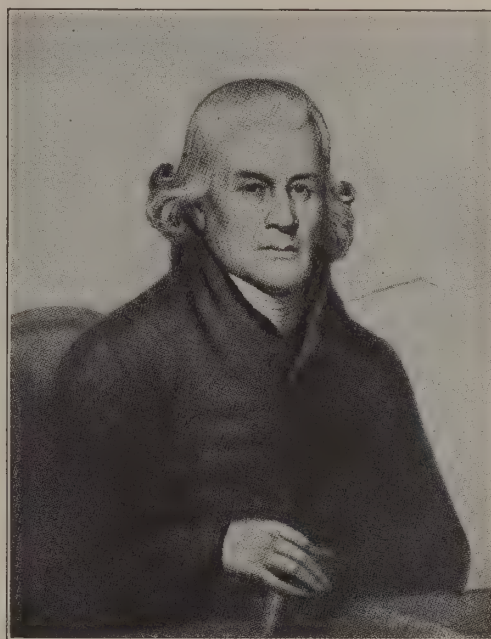


FIG. 5. Francis Asbury.

mous Christmas Conference in 1784 may be accounted for by the fact that he purposely set an example to the other preachers of travelling to the distant places and of not settling down in the comfortable conditions of a city appointment as many then and now are tempted to do.

Asbury's contacts with St. George's were many. His journal is full of the references to his visits to St. George's. He presided over the Annual Conferences held in St. George's the first being in 1788. It was from the conference in St. George's that Asbury, sick unto death, left for his final visit to the churches and for his "translation to the church triumphant" which came on March 31, 1816. Among the precious relics of Bishop Francis Asbury which are to be seen in St. George's are his pulpit Bible, the chair he used in St. George's, his glasses and razor, along with the desk he

used at the first conference he presided over in the church.

The accomplishments of this amazing man may be explained by a comment he made to a physician in Kentucky, Dr. Hinds, at whose house he was staying when on a very stormy night a call came. Although the doctor was not well himself, Asbury urged him to go saying, "As long as you can drag yourself about, always be found doing something."

ST. GEORGE'S EARLY SIGNIFICANCE

St. George's Church is inexorably associated with the beginnings of a great Protestant denomination which came to America as a mission and has grown to be not only the largest Protestant church body in the United States but a world church with work in fifty-six countries. Read the history of St. George's and you will have a comprehensive picture of early Methodism. Within the compass of this statement we can do little more than to indicate how St. George's participated in the "first events" of Methodism.

Methodism began as an evangelical rather than a doctrinal movement. But no church can adhere in a great on-going unit without a body of doctrine and the notion that Methodism had no doctrine has no basis in fact. The first important statement of Methodist faith as such was made by Joseph Pilmoor from the pulpit of St. George's on December 3, 1769. It was delivered in eight specific sections involving belief, conduct, and organization. The statement given at the very beginning of the work in America was intended "to prevent schism, to promote unity and to revive spiritual religion." To this day these have continued as the underlying objectives of the Methodist Church.

Joseph Pilmoor instituted two other innovations which have become common practice among Methodists and other religious bodies. On December 8, 1769, he held the first "Intercession" in St. George's, a modification of the national day of fasting and prayer regularly kept by the British Methodists and the beginning of what has become the New Year's Eve Watch Night Service. In this connection there is an interesting story affecting the American Revolution. It relates to the Continental Army at Valley Forge and George Washington. It is a matter of historic record that Washington, while at Valley Forge, wrote to Robert Morris, Philadelphia banker and merchant, beseeching him to send him \$50,000 in cash for the immediate needs of his ragged and starving army and on January 1, 1771, long before daylight Morris went to the home of his friends, got them out of their beds and secured the money which he sent to Washington. Now there is a story connected with this incident which says that Morris told his friends "that he had just come from an all-night prayer meeting

in St. George's Methodist Church where prayers were offered that God would open the hearts of the people to furnish the money needed to pay the troops at Valley Forge that the Army might be saved."¹

Pilmoor also held the first American Love Feast on March 23, 1770, a Moravian custom designed to symbolize and promote the true fellowship of Christian love in which cups of water and baskets of bread were passed and all partook in common with each other. The wicker baskets and cups used at this time are still preserved in the museum of St. George's.

The Annual Conference was a Methodist innovation where the preachers came together, discussed the work of the Church and were assigned to the places where they were to preach for the coming period of service. The first three of these conferences were held in St. George's: 1773, 1774, 1775. And while the Christian Conference in 1784 is generally looked on as the formal organization of the Methodist Church in America, Dr. Ezra Squire Tipple, a recognized Methodist historian said that "it was at the first conference in 1773 rather than at the Christmas Conference in 1784 where the Methodist Church had its birth."

At the 1774 conference a day of general fasting and prayer was proclaimed "for the prosperity of the Methodists and for the peace of America," typical of the loyalty to the American cause that kept Asbury in America to serve the religious needs of the people during the revolution as best he could when so many of the Church of England clergymen had returned to their homeland.

It was from St. George's that the African Methodist Episcopal Church had its beginning. Richard Allen, a Negro slave who bought his freedom in 1786 but who had been given a license to preach by St. George's in 1784, and was the first Negro in America licensed to preach by the Methodist Church, founded the first Negro congregation in America and organized the Bethel Church, now known as "Mother Bethel" to Negro Methodists. He became the first Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816.

An event of colossal significance to Methodism and the religious world had its beginning in St. George's in 1769 when Wesley's business in publishing religious books was begun by Robert Williams. Out of this came the founding of the Methodist Publishing House under the direction of John Dickins in 1789 with headquarters in St. George's. Today the Methodist Publishing House has assets of \$14,406,366 and does a gross business of \$13,865,006 a year. Most significant, however, is the fact that in the beginning the principle of using all the profits obtained from the publishing business for the aid of retired preachers, their widows and minor children, was established.

¹ Tees, Francis H., *The ancient landmark of American Methodism or Historic Old St. George's*, Phila., St. George's Church, 1951.

The pattern for the instruction of the young which has been a distinctive characteristic of American Methodism began in St. George's Church. There "the society for the support and instruction of the First Day School or Sunday School in the city of Philadelphia was constituted January 11, 1791." One of the first schools established was for girls, an innovation for which Wesley set the precedent by the first school of its kind for the instruction of girls opened in England. The breadth and influence upon the religious life of American youth begun in St. George's are indicated by the fact that in 1951 the Methodist Church produced 105,000,000 pieces of literature for church schools which were distributed to thirty-two different denominations.

At St. George's in the early part of the nineteenth century a regulation was enacted designed to encourage promptness upon the regular attendance of church officials at the meetings of the church board. The minutes for May 23, 1823, contain the following resolution:

Resolved that each member of this board who shall be absent after the time for meeting mentioned in the notice shall pay one cent for every minute he may be absent, and that all the sums thus collected shall be paid to the Poor Fund for the use of the poor of our society, provided always, nevertheless, that no larger sum than 50 cents shall be exacted from any member in the same evening.

The perpetuation of such a regulation I could heartily endure since as a church official I have spent a good part of my life waiting for tardy people.

The growth of Protestantism in America can be accounted for by the zeal for church extension which characterized individual congregations, especially during the nineteenth century. The country was growing and unoccupied areas were filling up with people. Churches not only looked on the founding of new churches as their duty but also as a source of pride, a spirit which needs now to be recaptured in the face of the religious problems created by our rapidly changing population. St. George's rightfully earned the title of "Mother of Churches." Groups have gone out from the Mother Church of Philadelphia Methodism to establish a dozen or more churches in the growing city.

ST. GEORGE'S THREATENED

The changing character of the city for which St. George's in its strength did so much through the establishment of new churches came finally to threaten the existence of St. George's itself. Beginning with a membership of 100 it grew until its membership numbered 3,716. But the community of homes in which it was situated changed to a commercial and industrial area and in 1925 it had dropped to 111. Not only during this period was the church threatened with extinction by the changed neighborhood but the march of progress also marked it for demolition, at least as an historic shrine. The Delaware River bridge project sought a

right of way over the ground on which the church was built. The church being in "the path of progress" it was assumed that the church had to go. However, through the efforts of Bishop Thomas B. Neely, a native of Philadelphia and a leader possessed of tenacity and influence, the construction of the bridge was changed by the engineers to miss the church by fourteen feet. This was a remarkable victory for the lovers and preservers of historic Philadelphia and appropriate tribute should be paid Bishop Neely and the Bridge Commissioners.

PRESENT SIGNIFICANCE OF ST GEORGE'S

Sometimes our most precious possessions are neglected and this was true of the preservation, care, and use of St. George's for a number of years. However, its value, both to the city and the Methodist Church, has now been recognized and the restoration of St. George's Church was begun in 1944. Since that time the church and the historic buildings connected with it on New Street have been completely renovated and restored to their original colonial design and the plan to make St. George's a great Methodist historical center has been realized. The New Street buildings now house the Historical Library which has become the official repository of the historical documents both of the Philadelphia and New Jersey Conferences. In connection with the library a museum of Methodism's priceless relics has been established and houses such priceless pieces as Asbury's Bible, the first chalice used by Methodists in the United States, the first desk used by Bishop Asbury in conducting the Philadelphia Conference, personal articles of Bishops Asbury and McKendree such as razors and spectacles, rare Bibles, early church dress, etc., which would provide many interesting hours of inspection for those who have the time for such a visit. The first floor of this building contains memorial rooms in colonial design for J. Wesley Masland, a devoted trustee, and Rev. Joseph Lybrand, pastor, librarian, and evangelist of Old St. George's. The library is a just and fitting memorial to Rev. Francis H. Tees, pastor of St. George's from 1931 to 1947 who more than any other person is responsible for St. George's preservation and for the written history of the church.

St. George's Church is more than an historic shrine. It is a fountain of inspiration and of service which continues to bless the spiritual life of the Methodist Church. In its sanctuary which seats about 1,000 people the annual ordination of candidates for the ministry takes place and the Asbury Bible is used in the service. For a number of years an annual series of broadcasts has originated at the vesper services sponsored by the Bishop of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Methodist Area. Several hundred young people preparing for church membership come to St. George's annually for a part of their instruction. The library renders valu-

able service in making available old records of churches which have gone out of existence.

St. George's, strengthened and restored by the loving attention it is now receiving, is a worthy and important part of the priceless American heritage which centers in Philadelphia. In that capacity it continues "to serve the present age."

Every generation, and this one especially, needs the inspiration of some worthy past with which it has an identification, if it is to live with satisfaction in its day. The present generation of Americans has lost much of its inherent power for life because it has neglected to saturate itself in the worthy purposes and achievements of its origins. Ours is an uncertain generation because it has forgotten the character and strength of its roots among which is a glorious religious heritage.

THE PENNSYLVANIA HOSPITAL

EDWARD B. KRUMBHAAR

Professor Emeritus of Pathology, University of Pennsylvania

AMONG the notable buildings of colonial Philadelphia, such as Gloria Dei, St. Peter's Church, Christ Church, and Independence Hall, the Pennsylvania Hospital stands in the front rank, both in its structural beauty and its excellent and successful adaptation to changing hospital needs during the past two centuries. The original building was designed in 1751, by one of its own Managers who was also a member of the American Philosophical Society, Samuel Rhoads, who had been apprenticed as a carpenter and was already a well-to-do builder. He also was entrusted by the Managers with supervision of the construction. A drawing of Rhoads' conception with its familiar Central Building and East and West wings is still in existence, differing only from the final form of the Central Building with its central cupola and façade with pilasters, its rounded window tops and entrance facing Pine Street. The East Wing, with the

"Terminal Wing" facing Eighth Street, was begun in 1755, the other parts awaiting sufficient funds and the greater space requirements that followed the conclusion of the Revolutionary War. The West Wing was constructed in 1796 with funds obtained by private subscription and legislative grant, and the Central Building a few years later. The whole structure has been repeatedly praised as an excellent example of colonial architecture, the double staircase in the center hall having been referred to by Joseph Pennell as one of the finest examples of this type of architecture in the country.

Need for a privately managed hospital "for the relief of the sick poor and for the reception and cure of lunatics" had long been in the mind of Thomas Bond, an original member and officer of the American Philosophical Society. He won over Benjamin Franklin, a President of this same society, whose diplomacy and energy

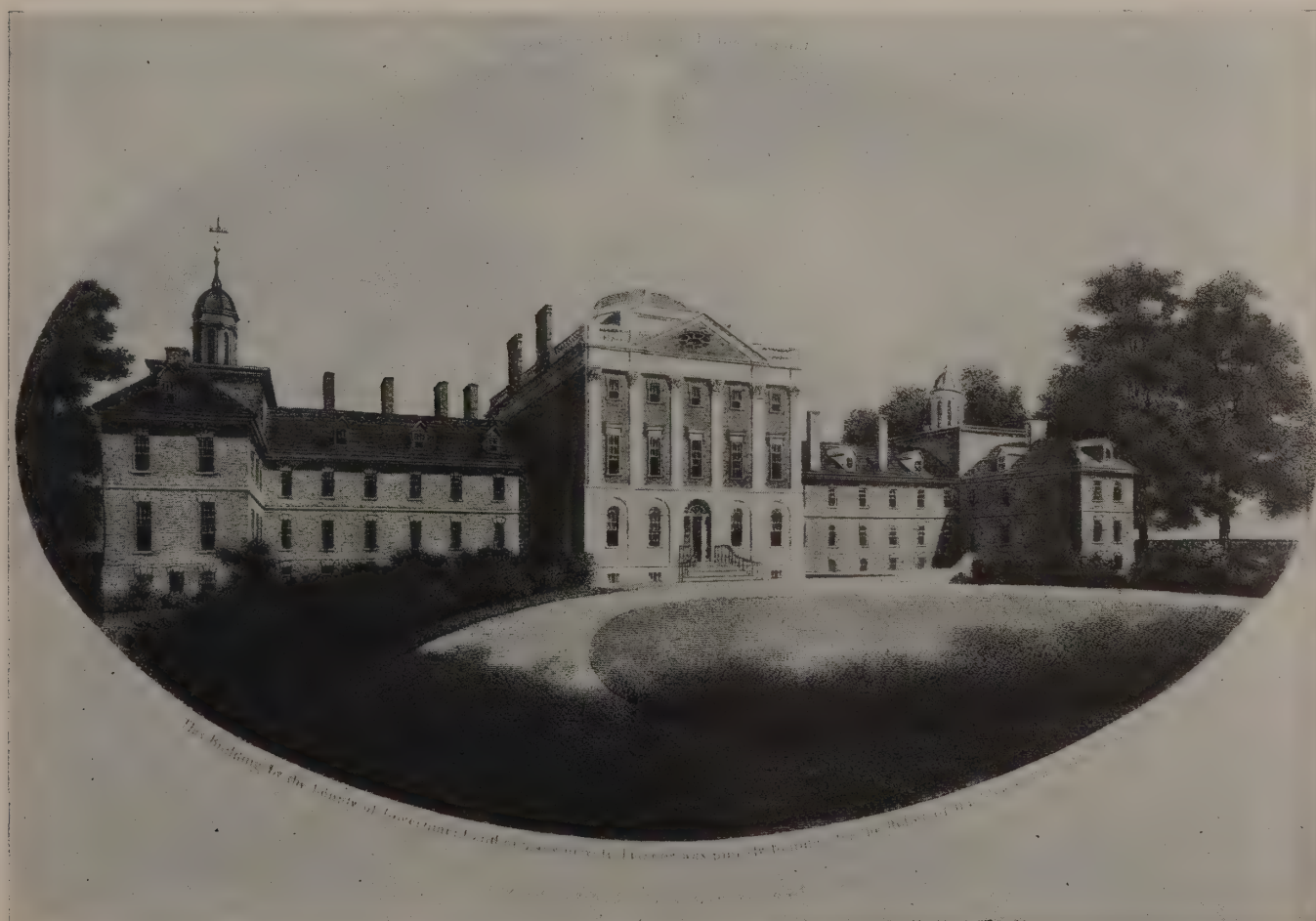


FIG. 1. View of the south front of the Pennsylvania Hospital. Engraved by W. Cooke, 1802. This and other illustrations are owed to the courtesy of the Pennsylvania Hospital.



FIG. 2. The builder's intended plan of the Hospital, printed by Robert Kennedy, 1755.



FIG. 3. The double staircase in the Central Building.

were largely responsible for bringing Bond's concept to fruition. The growing city of about twenty thousand people had not yet reached Eighth Street, as may be seen in the earliest engravings. In 1755 Alexander Graydon, for instance, spoke of Fifth Street as its west-

and of Penn's checker-board plan of streets extending from the Delaware to the Schuylkill only a few were in existence around Eighth and Pine. In fact, objection had been raised to the new site because of its distance from the city! The original purchase of three and a

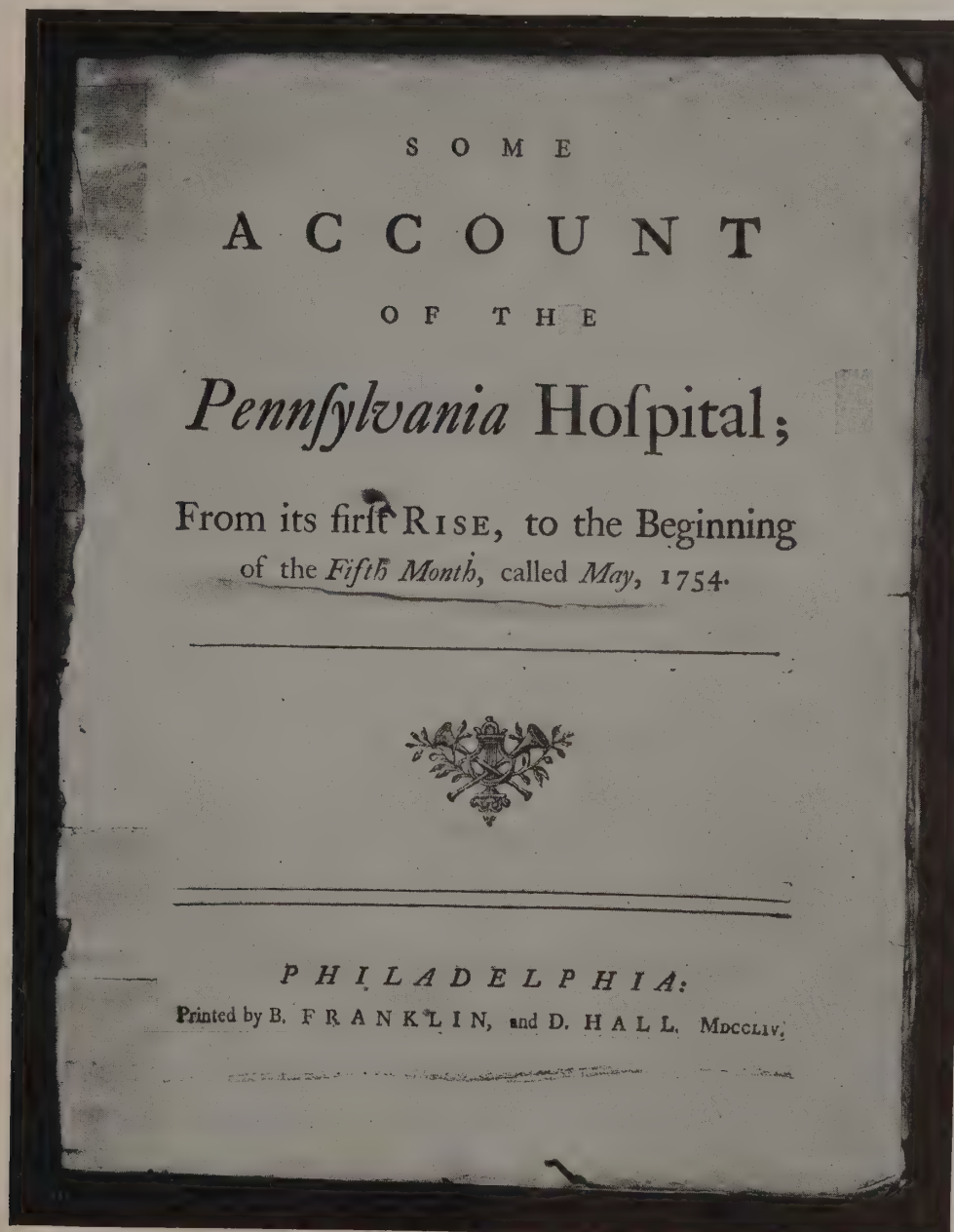


FIG. 4. An account of the creation of the Pennsylvania Hospital, written and printed by Benjamin Franklin, largely for propaganda purposes.

ern limit (see his Memoirs); at Sixth and Walnut there was a skating pond; and the square between Walnut, Chestnut, Sixth and Seventh Streets was fenced in and used for grazing till 1794 (Packard). The permanent site purchased for the Hospital for 500 pounds was thus in open country with footpaths crossing it diagonally;

third acres comprised most of the entire block between Eighth and Ninth, Spruce and Pine Streets. The square was completed in 1767 by a gift from the Proprietors, William Penn's grandsons, of an acre along the Spruce Street front. In passing, it is not generally known that at one time the Hospital owned the entire

block south of Pine Street, acquired for the protection of the Hospital from fire.

The cornerstone of the new building with Franklin's peerless inscription¹ was laid at 8 A.M. on May 28, 1755, in the presence of Managers, Staff and many Contributors (the parent body that elects the Managers) and a large crowd of citizens, including the children dismissed from public schools for the occasion. Among the crowd

1756. They were distributed in the long wards running east and west, the male sick on the first floor, the women on the second, and the "lunatics," as before, in the basement but in special cells that were much cleaner, drier, and better ventilated than those in the temporary hospital. From the annually prepared lists of cases, we can assume that the mental cases comprised a good third of the total (ten of twenty-seven for instance in

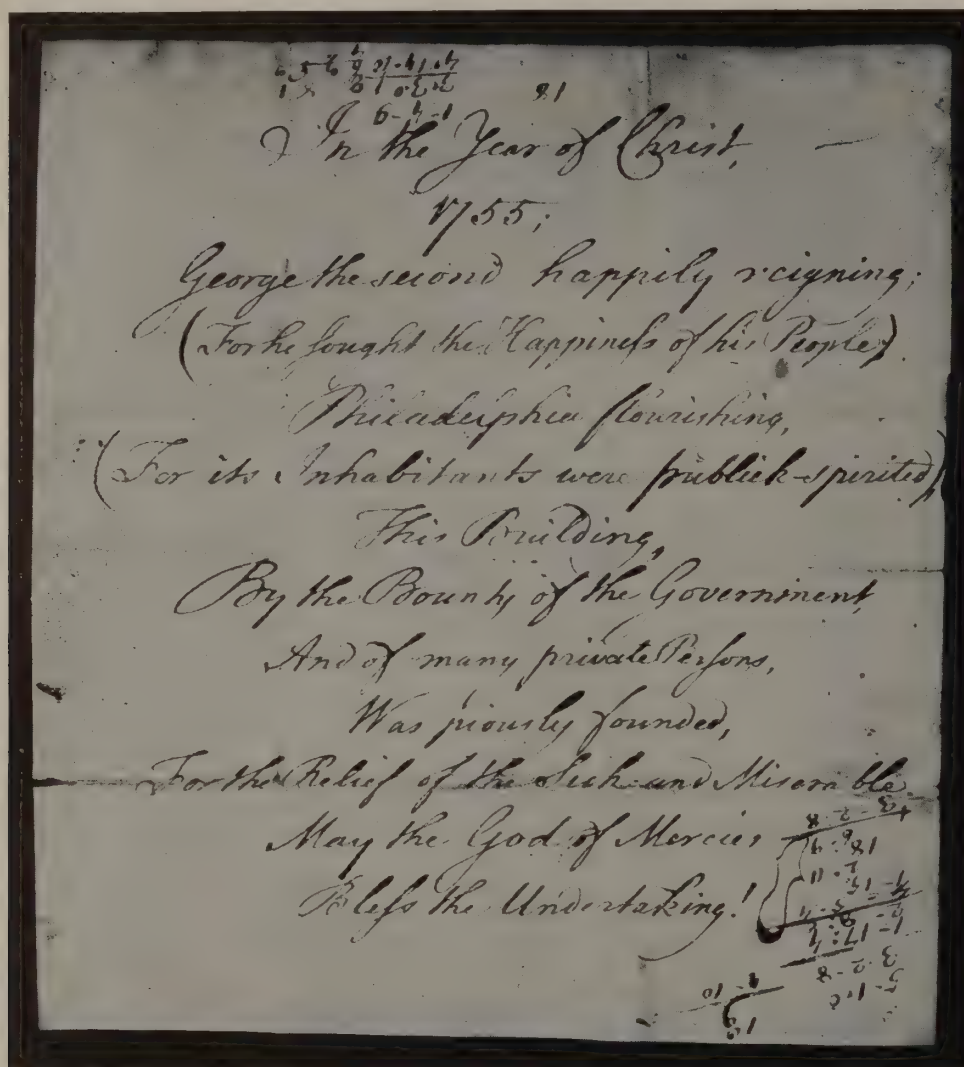


FIG. 5. Manuscript of Franklin's inscription for the Hospital's cornerstone, 1755.

was John Keys, the first to be born in the Colony after William Penn's arrival in 1682.

Patients were transferred from the temporary quarters in Judge Kinsey's house, No. 172 High Street, to the new but still uncompleted building on December 17,

¹ The manuscript in Franklin's handwriting somehow got to Germany where it was bought by A. S. W. Rosenbach in 1934, and turned over to the Hospital at cost price. This and the cornerstone itself, under the southeast corner of the East Wing, are historically important relics of the past that every tradition-conscious visitor should see.

1768). Incidentally, one of the first patients received in the temporary hospital, February 1752, was an insane case, Hannah Shines, admitted on the poor list. Other illnesses mentioned, according to one of the oldest lists, in order of decreasing frequency were "scorbutick and scrofulous disorders" (i.e., scurvy and tuberculosis), ulcers with caries, dropsy, "flux" and so on. Cancer and "annerism" were among the rarest, ague about as common as rheumatism, syphilis not even being mentioned. "Gutta serena" (a kind of blindness), "im-

posthume" (abscess) are but some of the terms then used that have now become obsolete, a reminder that in the eighteenth century very few diseases were called as they are today but named rather according to convenient groups of symptoms.

Originally one entered the Hospital through its terminal wing (i.e., the extension parallel to Eighth Street) by an entrance door still inscribed with the date 1755. The central hall led into apartments for the nurses, cooks, and general help at either end. On the second floor were the library which, as now, also served as the Managers' room, a drug room, and at the other end the apartments of the physicians. The museum was on the third floor. When the West Wing and central building

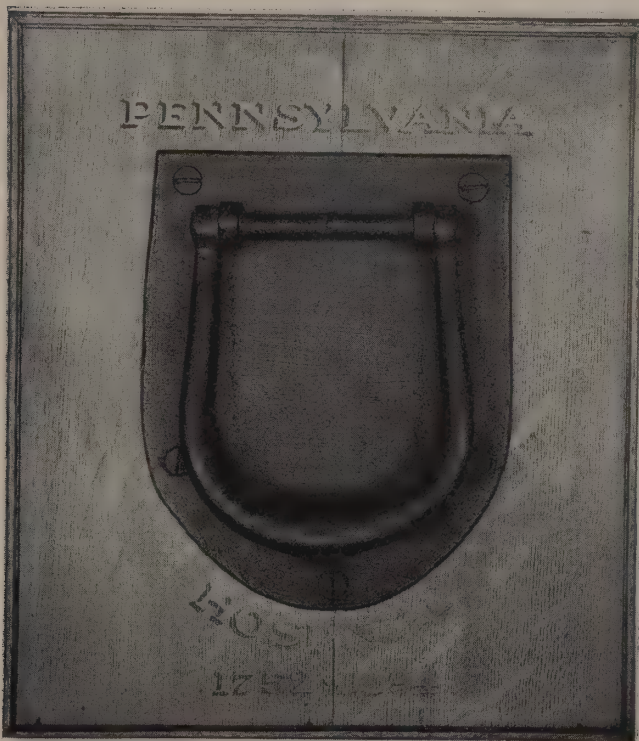


FIG. 6. Old gate knocker used to obtain admission to hospital grounds 1751-1894. Now in the hospital museum.

were completed near the turn of the century these conveniences were moved to the central building, the female lunatics being housed in the West Wing.

Living facilities were of the simplest but about the same as in the world outside. Heating was by wood fires only, illumination by candle light, ventilation practically restricted to opening the windows, no running water and therefore no bathtubs in the present sense. Each bed could be isolated at will by curtains, as in the large London hospitals, a humane custom that lapsed and was only reintroduced in the present generation.

The diet was plain but nutritious, to which delicacies and wines could be added as the occasion arose but only on the physician's prescription. A contemporary sam-



FIG. 7. Dr. Thomas Bond. (From a miniature, said to be the only representation of his features in existence.)

ple list for the week hangs framed in the Library, though probably certain items were left out, as taken for granted. Extras "such as tea, sugar, coffee, chocolate, wines or spirits, they provide at their own expence" (*sic*). By 1830 a sample dinner included beef, veal, mutton or pork (usually of two kinds), boiled or roasted, with a variety of vegetables (some from the hospital's own garden); puddings, pies, or fruits in season—apples, melons, peaches, etc., for dessert; bread at pleasure.

In these early days when much of the food was grown on the premises, the assistant staff of seventeen men and twenty-four women included a gardener, baker, ostler, cowkeeper, fourteen nurses, and twelve attendants for the insane of both sexes.

The professional staff of the Hospital, while still being organized, had already made a contribution of impor-



FIG. 8. Dr. Phineas Bond.

tance to hospital efficiency in this country: the problem of paying for their services, no small one for the infant hospital, was solved by their offering to serve gratis, a custom which is now universal in American hospitals. From the beginning the staff included a number of distinguished physicians: of the twenty appointed during the eighteenth century, all but four may be said to have achieved more than a local reputation. Of the first physicians appointed, three visiting—the Bonds and Lloyd Zachary—and four consultants—Graeme, Moore, Thomas Cadwalader, and John Redman—all but one of the seven had studied abroad, and Thomas Bond and Cadwalader stand high in the annals of early American medicine. Bond and his younger brother, Phineas, were both excellent clinical physicians, both among the founders of the American Philosophical Society, Phineas also being an organizer of what was to become the University of Pennsylvania and one of its first trustees.

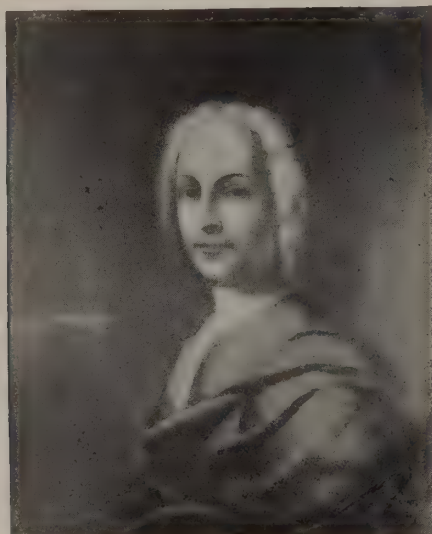


FIG. 9. Dr. Lloyd Zachary.

Older brother, Thomas, had the especial distinction of being the originator of systematic ward lectures and the first to give a regular course of clinical lectures in the Colonies—both events of prime importance in American medical education. Ward rounds, at first limited to the apprentices of the staff physicians accompanying their masters, were soon opened to other students. They came in such numbers that the staff recommended that those found acceptable should pay six pistoles to be applied to the founding of a medical library. After one year successful students were given certificates. Thus was started a library which for a good part of a century was the best medical library in the country.

The celebrated Fothergill crayons and plaster casts, readily to be seen among the treasures in the old Library, are properly cherished as among the most important relics that have come down to us of early medical education in this country. Presented in 1762 by Dr.

John Fothergill, the distinguished Quaker physician of London who was “untiring in his good offices” for the Hospital, they served for many years in the education of “Practitioners in Physic and Surgery.” Exhibited in a special room at a charge of one dollar per visitor, they brought in a considerable income. To William Shippen, Jr., who had talked with Fothergill while in London about his and John Morgan’s plans for starting a medical school in the new country, this material was entrusted, all the more valuable because of the great scarcity of anatomical material. With it as a basis, Shippen taught anatomy and surgery, at first to private classes, then to students of the newly founded (1765) Medical School that was to become the University of Pennsylvania. The colors of the seventeen large crayons of anatomical and obstetrical subjects, done by a well known artist, Van Riemsdyk, are as vivid today as when first made.² The three plaster casts have, surprising to state, survived the vicissitudes of two centuries without deterioration.

A regular course of clinical lectures, to supplement those on theory and practice with actual examples in patients, was inaugurated by Thomas Bond on November 26, 1766, when he invited the Managers and Staff of the Hospital to his house to hear his “Essay on the Utility of Clinical Lectures.” This account of a procedure now long noted as vital for proper clinical instruction fortunately so impressed the Managers that they not only approved the plan but ordered the essay to be included in its entirety in their Minutes, from which it has been reproduced in Morton’s History. “Clyncial” teaching, to be sure, had been given at the Hospital by the Staff Physicians from its beginning. It is not clear to the writer in just what way the content of Bond’s lectures differed from the earlier teaching or what relation the newly founded Medical Department of the College of Philadelphia bore to Bond’s proposal. It is clear, however, that Bond, whose lectures were open to all students and who never held any official position on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, met his pupils at stated times, examined the patient before them, and considered the individual diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment indicated. If the patient died when a diagnosis had not been made, he opened the body before his students, and pointed out the lessons to be derived—“the surest method of obtaining just ideas of diseases.” Bond continued this course of lectures until his death in 1784, interrupted only by the disturbances connected with the Revolution. He was joined by Physick, Rush, and others, and in fact, such lectures have been continued with modifications at the Hospital to this day. The matter is worth stressing as clinical instruction by lectures and ward rounds, based on the individual patient, so ably

² Photographs of the crayons and casts were reproduced in an article by the author in the *Annals of Medical History* 4: 271, 1922.

begun in the eighteenth century, languished for a full century in this country.

While on the subject of the Hospital's pioneer achievements, its first out-patient service in the country comes to mind, inaugurated before the founding of the now affiliated Philadelphia Dispensary, and even before its

finch was sent to Philadelphia by its Trustees to study our hospital as a model. The following story, about this first of clinical amphitheatres in the early days of ether anesthesia, is still told by Pennsylvania Hospital residents: in an emergency laparotomy on a large, powerful negro the ether sponge having been applied and

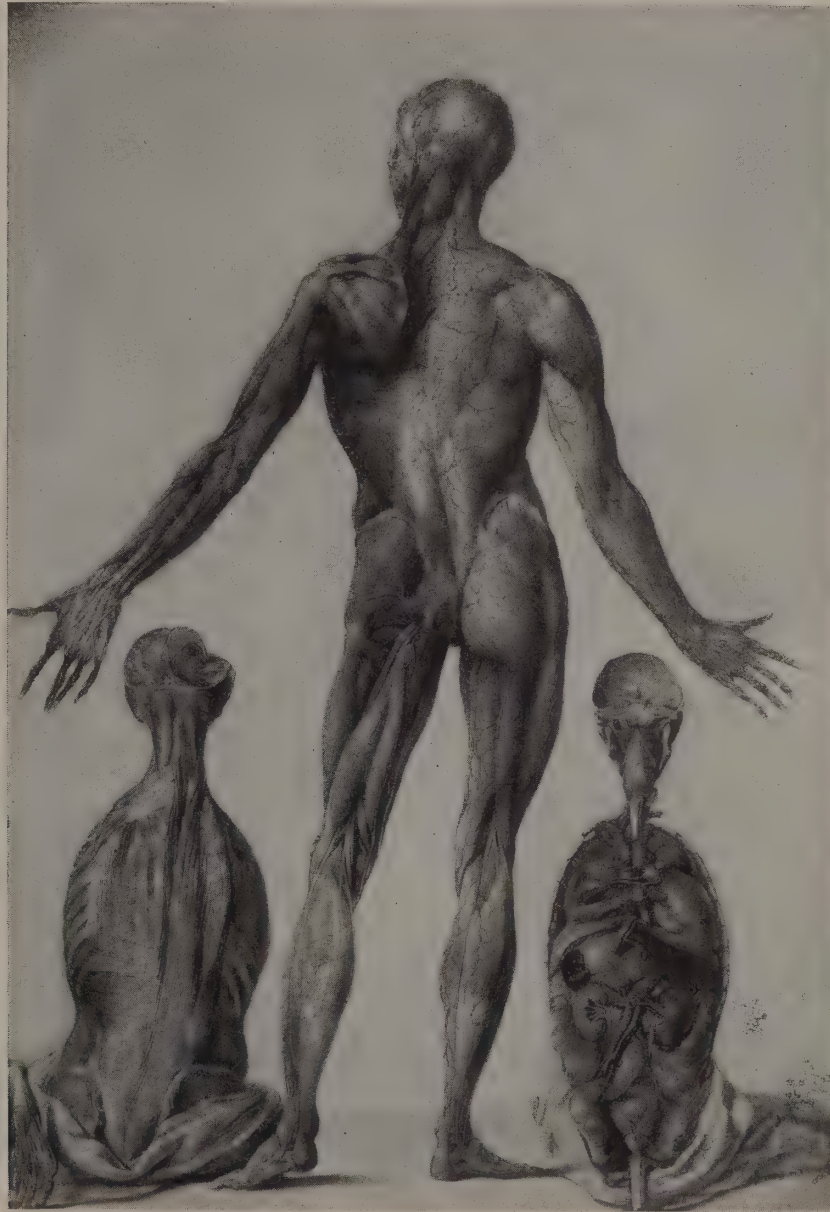


FIG. 10. One of seventeen anatomical crayons presented by Dr. John Fothergill to the Hospital in 1762.

own original building was completed. Another is its clinical amphitheatre, the first in the country, on the top floor of the Central Building, which served as a model for the one in the Massachusetts General Hospital, where ether was first successfully used in surgery. This was not the only inspiration for that great hospital, as Bul-

withdrawn and the abdomen widely opened, he suddenly jumped from the table and ran around the theatre, pursued by the operating staff. Fortunately, in spite of extruded viscera, another sponge was applied, the operation concluded, and the patient recovered.

Consideration of one more man of the distinguished

members of the Hospital staff in the eighteenth century naturally brings us to Benjamin Rush, the American Sydenham, generally recognized as the most eminent American physician of his day. He contributed notably to too many lines of human endeavor even to mention all of them here; fortunately, they can easily be found

tion, his courageous attendance during the yellow fever epidemic, his original description of dengue ("break-bone fever") and his lectures and observations are the items that first come to mind. A member of the staff from 1783 to his death in 1813, he gave such successful clinical lectures that attendance rose from a baker's



FIG. 11. The old clinical amphitheatre, used until 1868, with the seats, pillars, etc., in their original form. The operating floor is not shown, but the termination of the double staircase can be seen through the open door.

in his biography (by Goodman), his correspondence (edited by Butterfield), and an autobiography (edited by Corner) which have all become available in recent years. His activities at the Pennsylvania Hospital were extraordinary. Enlightened care of the insane, installation of baths and occupational therapy, practical views on alcoholism and on the distant effects of focal infec-

dozen into the hundreds. His frequent letters to the Board of Managers, which to be sure often failed to attain their aim, are mute witnesses to his tireless activity over many years. Rush's methods of making ward rounds and instructing students have been preserved for us in the *Journal* of the Reverend Manasseh Cutler (1787), which also pictures the Hospital routine when

still restricted to the East Wing. The Reverend Manasseh even found praise for the handling of the insane, though his description reminds one of a Hogarthian view of Bedlam, and the unfortunates were still exposed to the view of admission-paying curiosity seekers. It is strange that Rush, who was well in advance of his time in regarding insanity as a form of disease rather than a divine visitation, should be more often thought of as the inventor of the fierce-looking "Tranquilisator." Even this, however, was designed, as the name implies, to quiet the patient by enforcing muscular rest. He was one of the first to advocate various forms of labor and amusements involving exercises, i.e., occupational therapy, and also hydrotherapy, the water flowing from an overhead reservoir. It might be noted here too that in the earliest days of the Hospital, the Managers had provided spinning wheels, corded wool and flax, to occupy the mentally disordered.

In Surgery, Philip Syng Physick, a member of the Hospital Staff from 1794 to 1816, was unquestionably the leading American Surgeon of his time. Though averse to writing articles for medical journals, his reputation as a skillful operator persists, as in the removal of hundreds of vesical calculi from Chief Justice Marshall (aet. 75). Physick devised a flexible catheter, used absorbable catgut for ligatures, removed cataracts innumerable, did plastic repair of hare lip, and successfully applied the principle of the seton to the cure of ununited fractures.

Lest the above account may be suspected of exhausting the early scientific achievements of the Hospital staff, we might consider J. C. Otto's elucidation of the mode of inheritance of hemophilia ("the bleeder's disease") early in the nineteenth century; J. K. Mitchell's essay on the origin of malarious fever, which the medical historian, Garrison, ranked with Henle's "Miasms and Contagions" in establishing the parasitic nature of infectious diseases; W. W. Gerhard's differentiation (partly at the Pennsylvania and partly at the Philadelphia Hospital) of typhoid from typhus fever; and Morton's first appendectomy to be planned in the absence of an emergency (1887).

No notes about the Pennsylvania Hospital would be complete without some notice of Benjamin West's famous painting of Christ Healing the Sick in the Temple. Done in response to a request from the Managers in 1800 for a donation, the first version was kept in England as a nucleus for a National Gallery. The Hospital's painting was not received till 1817, when it was put on exhibition and brought in, altogether, more than twenty-five thousand dollars. Details of this story, including the construction of a special Picture House down to the picture's present location in the Administration Building, are given in Morton's History.

Various tales, as one might expect, have gathered about this ancient building, such as that of the leaden statue of William Penn on the lawn near Pine Street.

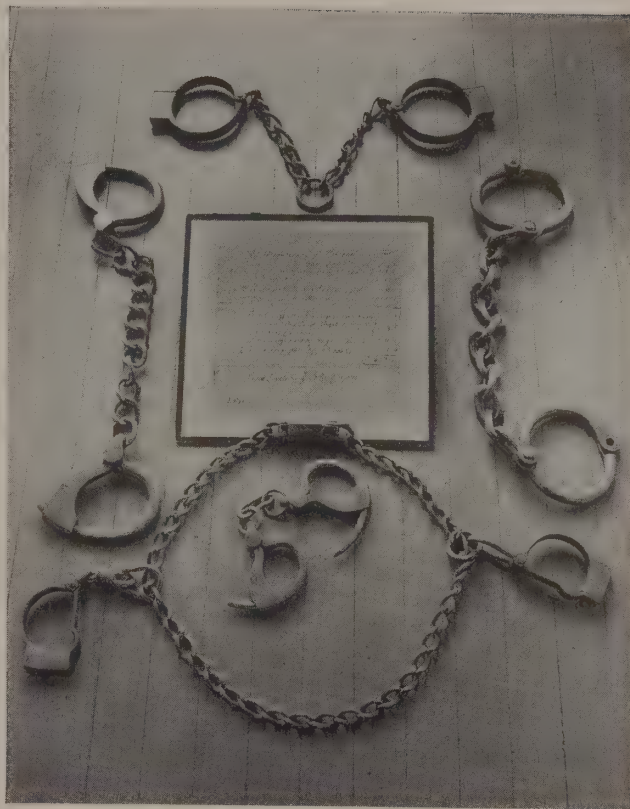


FIG. 12. Chains for restraining the maniacal lunatics, with bill for these and other hardware for hospital use.

This, even in the writer's Resident days, still held the "meteorological device" in which the daily rainfall was measured and entered in the Hospital book—the first systematic weather records kept in this country. Another is the story of the insane sailor, Thomas Perrine, who on admission in 1765 ensconced himself in the tower above the East Wing and remained there quite content until his death nine years later. Stephen Girard's wife, another mental case, lived in the hospital for twenty years. When she died she is said to have been buried in the Hospital grounds, but the location is no longer known. The Hospital's creditable record during the yellow fever epidemics, which caused the death in 1793 of the promising James Hutchinson; the donation by the First Troop Philadelphia City Cavalry of their Revolutionary War pay, which had been set aside to establish a foundling hospital, are among the various items of interest.

One of the most appealing stories is that of Evangeline, heroine of Longfellow's poem about the Acadian "displaced persons." Opinion has long been divided as to whether the quiet refuge that Longfellow chose for the final scene between Evangeline and Gabriel was the Friends' Almshouse on Walnut Street near Third [D, IV] or at the Pennsylvania Hospital. The accumulating evidence produced by the poet's family and H. J. Cadbury, Harvard's Quaker historian, point con-

clusively to the Pennsylvania Hospital as the site that Longfellow had in mind, as was demonstrated by Richmond P. Miller³ at the hospital's bicentennial celebration. A similar literary aura floats over the little walled-in Jewish graveyard opposite the Spruce Street side of the Hospital where lies Rebecca Gratz, admired of Washington Irving, who shortly after was the guest of Walter Scott while the latter was writing *Ivanhoe*. Scott later told him that he was so impressed by his account of the accomplished Jewess that he gave her name and character to *Ivanhoe's* heroine. To the writer of these lines the cemetery's gently waving trees were for some days a recurring delight, as the first and only visible signs of the outer world after several weeks of typhoid delirium.

The story of the Hospital Library, to which allusion has already been made, can fittingly conclude these notes. Housed at first in the Managers' Room, it was moved to the new Central Building on the first floor, and in 1807 to its present quarters on the Pine Street front of the second floor. Here it has remained except for eleven years (1824-1835) when it gave way to the Lying-in-Ward till the latter was moved to the already mentioned Picture House. At least one of these moves was due to an outbreak of puerperal fever in the Lying-in-Ward. The Library with its simple old book cases, extending from floor to ceiling, the upper shelves being served by a balcony reached by a concealed corner staircase, cannot fail to charm any bibliophile or lover of a tranquil past. It is doubtful if there is another like it in the country. Its shelves still contain handsome rare folios and duodecimos, though many were generously and appropriately presented to the Library of the College of Physicians a few years ago. In the catalogues printed at various times since 1790, one can trace the growth of the Library, which by 1893 contained 14,812 volumes. Today, its new texts and journals are kept in a comfortable reading room across the hall, the old Library being used as a Museum and for the Managers' and others' meetings. Here are displayed the

Hospital's memorabilia: minutes of the Managers' meetings, the earliest in Franklin's handwriting; original manuscripts, many of them unique and priceless; certificates of attendance at lectures and of service as residents and apothecaries; the Fothergill collection; manacles and chains for stapling the unfortunate "maniacs" to the wall; and similar objects of ancient interest.

The final word, as usual, must rest with the Managers, who have guided this venerable Institution so efficiently through its two hundred years. Meeting in the beautiful old Library, seated in the chairs supplied by the original Board at their own expense, far from resting on their laurels, they have continued to solve successfully the new problems as they arise. The result, seen in the chronological list prepared for the Bicentennial Celebration, has produced more new units and new projects and departments added by successive Boards in the past fifty or sixty years, always cautiously and after due deliberation, than in the whole previous history of the Hospital.

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³ *Pa. Hosp. Bull.* 9 (3), Whole No. 36, Aug. 1951.

PHILADELPHIA'S EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY FIRE INSURANCE COMPANIES

NICHOLAS B. WAINWRIGHT

Historical Society of Pennsylvania

WISDOM is born of experience, and so it is that disasters have their silver linings because they often tend to promote new or improved ideas. Such an idea rose from the ashes of the Great Fire of London in 1666. Its creator was an eccentric London doctor named Nicholas Barbon, a builder of houses whose reputation was no better than it should have been. "Damned Nicholas Barbon," some of his contemporaries called him, an excessively shortened version of the baptismal name given him by his pious father—If-Christ-had-not-died-thou-hadst-been-damned Nicholas Barbon. Despite the shrewdness Barbon displayed as a businessman, he died insolvent, instructing his executors not to pay any of his debts. So much for the founder of the first fire insurance company, a man who originated an industry whose reputation rests entirely upon its solvency and its promptness in paying its obligations.¹

Although marine insurance took early root in the American colonies, the idea of insurance against fire losses did not cross the Atlantic for many years. Charleston, South Carolina, gave birth to our first fire insurance company. Founded in 1735, the Friendly Society was short-lived, burnt out in the disastrous Charleston fire of 1740.²

In these early days the scale of living was hardly large enough to support fire insurance. The most practical approach to the problem was the creation of crude fire-fighting organizations, and it is not surprising that such organizations nurtured the germ of fire insurance in Philadelphia. Successive fires in the early years of the eighteenth century had frightened the city fathers into the purchase of various fire-fighting devices, but little control was established over this equipment. At the cry of "Fire!" the citizenry seized leather buckets for water, fire hooks to tear down walls, bags in which to rescue household goods, and ladders, and ran helter-skelter to the scene of trouble.

In 1735 Benjamin Franklin, struck by the confusion prevalent at fires, commented, "As to our Conduct in the Affair of Extinguishing Fires, tho' we do not want Hands or Good-will, yet we seem to want Order and Method." Franklin recommended the establishment of fire companies, a suggestion which soon bore fruit in Philadelphia's first volunteer fire force, Franklin's Union

Fire Company, founded in 1736. Other companies followed rapidly, until by 1752 there were eight in Philadelphia, all well-organized, well-disciplined, and well-equipped.

The safety of the city and its people as a whole was immeasurably improved by the new fire companies, but individual security from fire losses was nonexistent. Again it was Franklin who interested himself in the problem. His first insurance plan embraced only a tiny segment of Philadelphia's property owners, the thirty members of the Union Fire Company. Franklin and two other members of that organization, Philip Syng and Hugh Roberts, agreed to raise a fund for the establishment of an insurance office "to make up the Damage that may Arise by Fire among this Company." By November, 1750, the articles of agreement for this insurance plan were engrossed—all but one of the members of the Union Fire Company signed them.

There is no evidence that this initial Philadelphia fire insurance plan was ever put into operation. On the contrary, there is strong evidence that it was considered impractical, for an effort was soon under way to extend its benefits to a greater number of insurers. By June, 1751, attempts were being made to interest the other volunteer fire companies in the scheme. The minutes of the Fellowship Fire Company for July 5, 1751, state that "the Clark for the next ensuing month is ordered to acquaint all the members that they are desired to meet to consider a proposal for an insurance of houses."

Proof that Franklin was the promoter of this activity may be found in the minutes of the Union Fire Company for July 26, 1751, where it is recorded that

A proposal from Benjamin Franklin relating to the consideration of the late scheme for Insurance of Houses being read, Requesting that the Company would appoint two of their members to attend such Persons as may be appointed by the other Several Fire Companies to meet at the Standard in Market Street on the 7th day of the 7th Month to Consider such Matters as they may think will Tend Most to the Utility of Ye Inhabitants in General. They have accordingly appointed Benjamin Franklin & Philip Syng to attend. . . .

The "proposal," one that would "Tend most to the Utility of Ye Inhabitants in General," is typical of Franklin, and there can be little doubt that it is he who deserves the credit for forming the first successful fire insurance company in America, for his proposals found favor with the delegates of the other Philadelphia fire companies when they met at the Sign of the Royal Standard in Market Street [F, III].

Many months elapsed before insurance articles for a mutual company were perfected, apparently based on the articles of an English company, the Amicable Contribu-

¹ Bainbridge, John, *Biography of an idea*, N. Y., Doubleday, 1952.

² Wainwright, Nicholas B., *A Philadelphia story: The Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of Houses from Loss by Fire*, Phila., The Phila. Contributionship, 1952. Except where otherwise indicated, the present article is based on this work. For another title on Philadelphia insurance, see Fowler, J. A., *History of insurance in Philadelphia for two centuries*, Phila., Review Publishing and Printing Co., 1888.



FIG. 1. Fire mark of the Philadelphia Contributionship, showing the four clasped hands from the seal designed by Philip Syng.

tionship for Insuring Houses from Loss by Fire, familiarly known from its fire mark as the Hand-in-Hand. It was not until February 18, 1752, that Franklin's *Gazette* announced that the articles of insurance would be at the Courthouse every Saturday afternoon until April 13, where they could be signed by those wishing to participate in the venture. James Hamilton, Governor of Pennsylvania, was the first to place his name on the now historic insurance contract. Directly under Hamilton's signature is that of Benjamin Franklin.

The deed of settlement, for so the articles of association were termed, stated that "we whose Names are hereunto subscribed" had agreed to establish an insurance office by the name of the Philadelphia Contributionship for the Insurance of House from Loss by Fire, "and to be and continue Contributors unto and equal Sharers in the Losses as well as the Gains." Insurance was to be written for seven-year terms and was limited to an area within ten miles of Philadelphia in Pennsylvania.

All of Franklin's efforts so far had been but prelude. The curtain, however, was about to go up, for on April 13, 1752, "sundry subscribers" to the deed of settlement

met at the Courthouse and elected twelve directors, headed by Franklin, and a treasurer who bore the honest name of John Smith. Thus was founded the Philadelphia Contributionship, a mutual company now in its third century of business.

The original management was composed of men accustomed to working together. Six of them had been elected in the previous year to the first Board of Managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital, eight had served as directors of The Library Company, and six were members of the Union Fire Company. They had yet another bond—all but three, Franklin, Syng, and Strettell, were Quakers. Members of the Society of Friends were to predominate on the board for nearly a century, eventually giving way to members of the Episcopal Church.

The Contributionship's first board contained a number of men whose professions made them particularly useful in the organization of the new company. Director Philip Syng, a silversmith, designed the company's seal which showed "four Hands united, with this motto: Philadelphia Contributionship." The company's book-keeping system was set up by director William Coleman, a businessman of marked ability. Director Hugh Roberts, an ironmonger, contracted for the fire mark which displayed the four clasped hands of Syng's seal. Director Benjamin Franklin printed the policies, and directors Joseph Fox and Samuel Rhoads, both master builders, were appointed surveyors to examine houses offered for insurance. Service as a director was considered a civic duty. Board members received no fees for attendance at meetings; on the contrary, fines were levied for lateness or absence.

As a matter of historic note the company's first policies were written on June 2, 1752, when Fox and Rhoads reported their survey of Treasurer John Smith's dwelling and detached kitchen on Water Street. These risks were accepted in policies 1 and 2, issued by the Contributionship in a strict numerical sequence which has continued to the present day. Business was brisk during the next few months and the future of the company seemed assured. Before long the treasury contained enough premiums to justify an investment, and a mortgage yielding interest at six per cent was purchased. Mortgages on improved Philadelphia real estate constituted the company's sole field of investment during the eighteenth century.

The Contributionship's ability to accumulate funds for investment resulted from an amazingly good fire loss record. There were no fires at all during the company's first year of operations; in fact, the initial loss was not suffered until December, 1753. On that occasion the directors assembled in special session to examine the fire damage suffered by Peter Bard's house on Water Street. The destruction had been extensive, and the board immediately ordered "the water and dirt to be cleared from the floor & to glaze all the sashes that are not broke."

In reporting the fire in his *Gazette*, Franklin remarked with satisfaction that "the House being insur'd, the Damage will be immediately repaired, without Cost to the Owner."

Despite occasional losses, the company's record continued to be a good one, and fortunately so. After the momentum generated by its founding had expended itself, business fell off alarmingly and it would not have taken many fires to terminate the insurance experiment. By the end of the Contributionship's first two years, in March, 1754, the company had issued two hundred and fifty-four policies; during the next five years it wrote only one hundred and sixty-three more. By 1760, however, a turning point was reached and a renewed demand for insurance won out over the uncertainties of the past few years.

The Contributionship's good fire record in its early years was not wholly coincidental. A great part of it stemmed directly from its carefully selected risks. Prudently, the directors limited acceptable risks to houses built according to legal specifications, and buildings containing coopers' shops or wooden bakehouses were refused insurance. Every house insured was required to have a trap door to the roof, protected with iron hand-rails, as a facility for fighting roof and chimney fires.

In a day when most men labored at their trades in the buildings where they lived, many houses were denied insurance because of the nature of the work conducted within them. Apothecary shops were occasionally insured, always with reluctance, but not properties in which oil was burned: "Boiling oil is a wild ungovernable Thing; such Business should never be done within Doors." Understandably, buildings storing gunpowder were considered uninsurable risks. Of the "moral" risks which influenced early fire insurance, the most serious and lasting was the prejudice against theaters, and today, as in 1752, the Contributionship refuses to insure theaters. Thus, it may be said, wise policy, as well as good fortune, contributed to the success of the experiment. Fire insurance had come to Philadelphia to stay.

Although Franklin himself did not remain long on the board, the directors formed a cohesive unit whose individual members tended to remain in the company's service for life. The tradition of longevity which still attaches itself to the Contributionship's board stems from 1761, when the directors voted that the company pay the expenses of their "meeting about the business of the office"—in other words, for the dinners which customarily followed the board meetings. The directors had reason to expect something for their services, for in 1754 they had civic-mindedly voted that money from their fines be used to purchase fire buckets for the watchmen's "Centry" boxes, and in 1761 they had applied a large sum drawn from the same source to place milestones on the road to Trenton.

Not until 1836 did the Contributionship acquire its

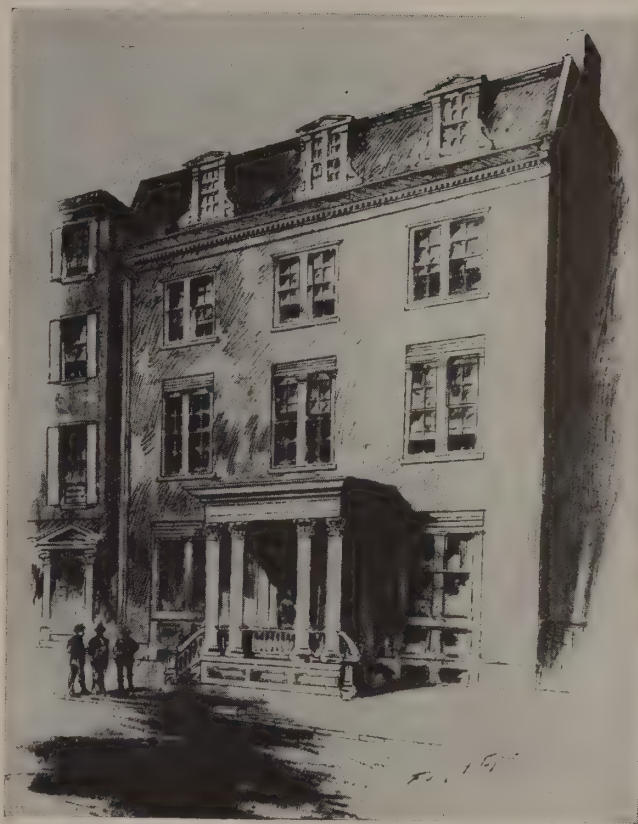


FIG. 2. The Philadelphia Contributionship building, 212 South Fourth Street. From J. F. Lewis, *History of an old Philadelphia land title*, Phila., 1934.

present handsome brick building on South Fourth Street [C, V]. Prior to that time its office was to be found either at the quarters of its sole employee, the clerk, or, after 1817, in a rented office at 109 Dock Street. Directors' meetings were held at fashionable taverns. Although the company owned no building of its own, many of the most substantial residences in town testified to its presence because they bore its mark. Firmly fastened to the face of insured buildings, the company's emblem of four hands clasped, cast in lead and mounted on a wooden shield which also bore the policy number, served to warn firefighters to be careful in their work. Policyholders themselves were supposed to fix the fire marks to their houses, a duty too often neglected. After a fire at Edward Shippen's house in 1755, the directors observed that "much of the damage was done thro' indiscretion which they think might have been prevented had it appeared by the badge being placed up to notify that the sd. house was so immediately under their care." After 1758 the board found it necessary to employ a man to put up the fire marks.

A basic principle of the Contributionship's original plan was the participation of policy-holders in the profits. But it was soon realized that the company's funds were too slender to permit dividend payments without endangering the security of the enterprise. Consequently, in

1763 the profit-sharing idea was abrogated, and the principle of accumulating assets was instituted. For more than one hundred and thirty years the Contributionship followed this accumulation policy, until it had amassed assets far greater than were needed for even the most conservative security.

The decision on profit sharing was not the only important change adopted by the company in its early years. Practical experience pointed to the desirability of other modifications or innovations. In 1768 an act of incorporation was secured, as it had been found that "great inconveniences have arised in lending the stock of the Company for want of a law by which we may be incorporated." The following year another lasting ruling was laid down when the company decided not to insure wooden buildings. These changes were unquestionably wise ones, but in 1774 the board adopted a policy concerning trees which had much less merit. No longer were the directors willing to accept for insurance houses shaded by trees. Trees not only constituted a fire risk, but interfered with the operation of the primitive fire engines. Many persons whose insurance came up for renewal were perforce required to cut down their trees before their policies could be reissued. Resentment over this stern mandate did not come to the fore immediately, however. Philadelphia's property owners had something far more important to think about. A revolution was brewing.

The Revolutionary period presented the Contributionship with a succession of awkward problems. To begin with, on the outbreak of the war many policy-holders removed from Philadelphia. Late in December, 1776, it was noted that many of their buildings had been occupied in their absence by soldiers of the American forces. Since interested persons were unavailable to see that chimneys were swept, the board took it upon itself to order their cleaning at the Contributionship's expense. Two hundred and seventy-five chimneys were thus cared for in houses "where the militia and other soldiers have been quartered." Chimney fires were the great hazard of the day and had caused the directors much alarm. It is possible that the board was responsible for a law passed in 1772 regulating the conduct of chimney sweeps and requiring them to be registered, for the clerk of the Contributionship was appointed by the colonial Assembly "the officer for registering and granting certificates to chimney sweepers."

No wartime problem posed so alarming a predicament as the depreciation of the currency. Persons who refused to accept Continental money were branded as traitors, but the great outpouring of paper notes from the presses so debased their value that even patriot creditors were reluctant to collect their debts in such a medium.

When Peter Wentz in June, 1777, applied to discharge his bond, the matter was treated as a crisis. The entire treasury of the Contributionship would be-

come worthless if all its good mortgages were to be paid off in paper. By informing Wentz that he would not be required to pay further interest, the directors succeeded in postponing the action he had requested. In another instance, in December, 1778, the board permitted the reduction of the interest rate on a bond from six to three per cent to prevent payment of principal. As for accepting premiums in debased currency, the directors decided in January, 1780, not to accept any new risks because of the "present unsettled state of the currency and the prospect of its soon being fixed to a more certain standard."

During this period of monetary upset, the Contributionship was frequently embarrassed by lack of funds. One such instance occurred while the British occupied the city and empty houses insured by the company were filled with soldiers of the invading army. Once again it was felt necessary to clean the chimneys of these buildings at company expense. All the arrangements to do this had been made when it was discovered that the chimney sweeps could not be paid because "the Board find their funds to consist entirely of paper money now not current."

After the British withdrawal, continuing inflation brought further demands. In March, 1779, the clerk's salary was quadrupled in the hope that he would find it a "reasonable compensation," but a year later there was not enough money available to settle his account. The monetary crisis in April, 1779, caused the board to raise its charges for renewals and transfers to dizzy heights, although it was hopefully stated that the new rates would apply only for the next three months. The cost of the directors' dinners soared to fabulous amounts. One indication of the extent of the inflationary spiral may be seen in the offering of seven hundred and fifty pounds Continental money for the refund of a ten-pound deposit in December, 1780. At this time the rate of seventy-five for one, if paid in Continental paper, was standard in the collection of delinquent mortgage interest.

Just when times were assuming a more normal aspect in 1782, the directors were confronted with the problem of extensive damages suffered by John Dickinson's mansion near Independence Hall. Dickinson, who had that year become the chief executive officer of Pennsylvania under its first state constitution, had earlier requested compensation for his countryseat Fair Hill, burned by the British in 1777. The directors had been successful in putting him off on that occasion, no doubt on the same grounds that they had used in refusing to pay losses on Peel Hall, another mansion destroyed by the enemy. Their argument rested on the fact that the building had been purposely destroyed and in full view of a multitude of observers, none of whom had attempted to save it. The policy form made no exception to insurance on such grounds, but the directors' decision prevailed.

Dickinson's second loss was caused by lightning on March 27, 1782, and this time he requested that the

Company immediately make good the damages. The directors visited his house, in which the French Ambassador Luzerne was then living, and found that "the principal ravage was in a chamber containing an iron bedstead, in which the Ambassador himself slept, by way of security from the bugs; in that room large blocks of marble were rent to pieces, and torn from the chimney piece." There had also been a casualty. A French officer had been knocked unconscious when the house was struck, his clothes had caught fire from his pipe, and he had burned to death. But all this made little impression on the board. Since no part of the building had been damaged by fire, Dickinson was a second time informed that the Contributionship was not liable.

Revolutionary times brought forward new men and new ideas, and it was against a growing spirit of liberalism that the conservative Contributionship entrenched its 1774 policy relating to the insurance of houses with nearby trees. At the General Meeting of 1781 the following questions were put to the contributors:

1. Shall any houses be ensured which have a tree or trees planted before them in the street?
2. Shall any houses be reinsured which have a tree or trees planted before them in the street?
3. If any person in future shall plant any tree before his or her house in the street, if not removed in three months, from the time of planting, shall they forfeit the benefit of insurance?

On each of these questions the contributors attending the meeting at the Courthouse on April 9, 1781, voted unanimously against the interests of tree lovers. The tree question soon became a political one, for an act was passed in April, 1782, ordering all trees growing in the streets, lanes, and alleys of the city to be removed as they were a nuisance "and must tend to spread fires when any break out within the said city." Such a law, however, was too severe, and in September of the same year it was repealed because a great number of Philadelphians had protested, claiming that "trees planted in the streets conduce much to the health of the inhabitants, and are in other respects of great public utility."

Encouraged by this success, tree owners again brought pressure on the company to change its bylaws, and the matter was once more brought up at the General Meeting of 1784 as the result of a petition signed by more than forty people. So great was the interest in the problem, that instead of the bare dozen who normally attended such meetings, the large number of forty-nine policy-holders was present. This question was put to them: "Shall a law which was made at a General Meeting on April 9th 1781 be repealed?" Unfortunately, no record of the debate has been preserved. Only a single sentence in the Contributionship's minute books is to be found stating the action taken: "Resolved in the negative by a considerable majority."

By this vote the company created its first competition, for its dissident members, joined by those to whom in-



FIG. 3. Fire mark of the Mutual Assurance Company, known as the Green Tree.

surance was denied because of their trees, met and organized. Their first meeting, held on July 5, 1784, and attended by some sixty-one men of note, including such persons as Dr. Benjamin Rush, Charles Willson Peale, Jared Ingersoll, Samuel Powel, and Thomas Willing, drew up an olive branch proclamation. Noting their desire to have insurance on houses shaded by trees and their willingness to pay extra "for the supposed risque attending trees," they found it necessary to create another company. However, as they were actuated solely by a desire to safeguard their property, and had no intention of prejudicing the existing company, they served notice that if the objectionable bylaw was repealed within two months and a reasonable premium fixed for tree risks, they would drop their plans of forming a new organization.

The Contributionship's directors proved adamant to this offer, and so from the old and conservative there evolved a new company, which, if somewhat more liberal and progressive, was still a true scion of the old stem. The opposition met at the City Coffee House on September 29, 1784, and formed the Mutual Assurance Company. Its organization was virtually identical to that of the older company's, except that instead of twelve directors it provided for thirteen trustees.

In framing its articles the Contributionship's deed of

settlement was copied almost verbatim, save for mention of the trees for which an extra premium was specified, together with the direction that all trees be trimmed every fall so that they would reach no higher than the eaves of the houses. For a fire mark the Mutual fittingly selected a tree "formed in lead." From this badge Philadelphia's second fire insurance company came to be known as the Green Tree.

After holding a monopoly in the fire insurance field since its founding, the Contributionship was now faced with a new situation. The trend of the times, together with the expansion of insurable interests, inevitably brought other competitors into business. Notable among such later ventures was the formation in 1792 of the Insurance Company of North America—a stock company, unlike its two predecessors which were mutuals—which broadened its field from marine coverage to the writing of fire insurance in 1794. The decision

of the North American to enter the fire insurance field followed almost immediately upon the chartering of the Insurance Company of Pennsylvania on April 18, 1794, with authority to write fire insurance.³

From the permanent establishment of fire insurance with the Philadelphia Contributionship to the present day, the number of companies handling this coverage has multiplied many times. Founders, however, are frequently so deeply rooted in the past that their careers do not match the evolution of those who follow in their footsteps. And so it has been with Benjamin Franklin's Contributionship and its friendly rival the Mutual Assurance Company. They have remained small and conservative, while the North American has developed into a truly modern, giant enterprise.

³ James, Marquis, *Biography of a business, 1792-1942, The Insurance Company of North America*, Indianapolis and N. Y., Bobbs-Merrill, 1942.

PEALE'S MUSEUM

CHARLES COLEMAN SELLERS

Curator of Dickinsoniana, Dickinson College

OFFICIALLY, in its publications and newspaper announcements, it was "The Philadelphia Museum." But to its own public, to posterity and to fame it has always been "Peale's Museum." Its history extends from 1784 to 1854—seventy years—although at least half of them belong to its periods of infancy and decay. Its contribution to American life and culture was unique and far-reaching, and embodies what was perhaps the most astonishing example of institutional split-personality in our civilization.

It had for precedents the eighteenth-century gentlemen's "cabinet" of scientific curiosities, and such other collections as those of Sir Hans Sloane in London or of Philadelphia's strange Swiss magpie, Pierre Eugene du Simitière. In Europe, from such beginnings, the great public museums were growing, centers of research, foundation stones of scholarship. The American democracy, however, was not ready to become a patron in the aristocratic tradition of either science or art. Even so, our populace possessed a raw, keen interest in both, the like of which was unknown across the water and which was heightened by those Protestant inhibitions against all forms of popular entertainment, against, indeed, amusement for amusement's sake in any form. Fortunes were to be made in this country by the presentation of entertainment disguised as education, and the first of these fell to the painter, Charles Willson Peale. To him the educational ideal was of deep and sincere concern. But the first and sustaining impulse was economic, and the history of the enterprise shows these motives in conflict throughout.

Peale had always been a dabbler in "philosophy," in the contemporary broad sense of the word, extending from theory of government to the mechanical sciences. He was a southerner, scornful of Puritan taboos and open to new ideas. He was a reader and admirer of the French radical thinkers, a friend and disciple of their American counterparts, from Paine to Rittenhouse. His investigations and experiments, pursued throughout his life, were noteworthy for ardor and activity rather than for accomplishment. He was a painter, and his contribution was not that of a scientist but of an expositor and popularizer of science.

Before the Revolution, Peale had been the fashionable portrait painter of the middle colonies. He moved with his family from Maryland to Philadelphia just as the capital became the objective of the enemy campaign—joined the city militia, joined Washington's beaten army at the Delaware in December, 1776, and was on the battle-line at Princeton. With the close of the Philadelphia campaigns in 1778, Captain Peale emerges as a leader in the seething Pennsylvania politics, a mild, con-

ciliatory figure but none the less one of the left-wingers who drove Robert Morris and the financial interests out of power in state affairs and into a stormy limbo for a year. He helped rid the city of its wealthy Tories, he antagonized its wealthy Whigs with disastrous effect on his patronage as an artist.

He retired from politics, where personal conflicts had always been distasteful to him, and sought to retrieve his professional standing. Since early days in Maryland, his studio had been a place of popular resort, and the flow of visitors a source of business. He set out to enhance it by adding a portrait gallery of Revolutionary heroes, for which he built, adjoining his house at Third and Lombard Streets, a skylighted building, the first of



FIG. 1. The Philadelphia Museum, 1784 to 1794. From a hitherto unpublished sketch in oils on panel, 7½ by 5¼ inches, painted *ca.* 1794 and attributed to James Peale. The C. W. Peale house at Third and Lombard Streets is shown, with the long skylighted gallery added in 1782. At its end is the small addition built for "moving pictures" in 1785, and later transformed into the first "Marine Room."

the sort in America [D, VII]. For some years he had been desperately poor, and the long frame structure was completed only with penny-scraping labor.

The painter's brother-in-law stopped here in the summer of 1784. Colonel Nathaniel Ramsay, himself a Revolutionary hero, was a lawyer and a business man. His eye was taken not by the portraits of his comrades in the late conflict, but by Dr. John Morgan's collection of mastodon bones, temporarily on view there while Peale finished a commission to make drawings of them. Here, said Ramsay, gazing in awe on the gigantic remains, was a sight he would have "walked twenty miles to behold. Doubtless," he went on, "there are many men like myself who would prefer seeing such articles of curiosity than any paintings whatever."

Peale had great respect for Ramsay's opinion, and his mind leapt here to the idea of forming a museum. He consulted at once with Professor Robert Patterson of the University of Pennsylvania, who heartily endorsed

the plan and reinforced his encouragement with the gift of a paddle fish—long treasured as the Philadelphia Museum's first accession. So here were demonstrated at once the two facts that were to make the Museum so profitable: people were not only eager to come to see curiosities of nature, but often, when they had them, eager to donate them to a collection where they would be seen.

Two years later—the interval occupied by an effort to recapture his fortunes by showing "moving pictures"—on July 18, 1786, Peale announced in the papers that he would make his house

a Repository for Natural Curiosities. . . . The several Articles will be classed and arranged according to their several species; and . . . on each piece will be inscribed the place from whence it came, and the name of the Donor, unless forbid, with such other information as may be necessary.

From its inception, the serious purpose was in evidence. This was to be no hodge-podge, but an orderly exposition of natural history, based on the Linnaean classification, and of inanimate materials, throughout the entire world. Peale was then forty-five years of age, but this was, in a sense, the beginning of his life. The forty-one years that remained to him were all dedicated to this one task—given to it with tireless industry, with the tireless zeal of the born collector, with a religious enthusiasm that sought to replace Scriptural revelation by a direct revelation of the Creator through His works—by a simple and boyish delight in revealing wonders to an astonished public. He continued to paint portraits, working mostly in Maryland where his political activity had made no enemies, but his interest had passed from art to natural history.

Taxidermy was unknown in Philadelphia, and he had to develop his own method for mounting and preserving animals—failed with the French angora cat contributed in 1786 by Benjamin Franklin, but succeeded with Washington's gift of golden pheasants made soon after and still extant in the collections of Harvard University. The "habitat arrangement," revived at the American Museum of Natural History a century later, was originated by Peale, whose artistic sense led him at once to place his mountings before painted backgrounds of their natural surroundings, this illusion brought to the foreground and completed by the introduction of rocks, foliage, nesting, or other appropriate objects. From the first, a section was devoted to marine life and reptiles—perforce a little crowded but carried out in the same realistic manner.

Peale's was the first modern museum in that it sought not only to aid the scholar but to teach the populace. His mounting, for instance, of a rattlesnake's fangs under a lens so fixed that the manner in which the poison is injected could be clearly seen was good modern museum procedure. Scholars often resented a practice that savored of showmanship and that held them aloof



FIG. 2. Philadelphia Museum Mountings. Alexander Wilson's *American Ornithology* and Dr. John D. Godman's *American Natural History* were both produced in close collaboration with the Philadelphia Museum. There is reason to believe that Godman's illustrations, two of which are shown here, were drawn directly from the Museum specimens.

from their materials, and yet, through the years, Peale's popularization was enormously effective, created an awareness of natural history and a widespread interest in it that stimulated the work of the serious naturalists much more than they realized.

Peale's long career as an artist made him sensitive to arrangement and color and pictorial effect, sensitive to audience reaction, eager to amaze, please, and inform his public. And there was a yet deeper impulse for, as one of the rationalists of the Revolutionary years, he felt a missionary impulse to spread the Deist doctrine of God and nature. The museum of his enthusiastic imagination was always far ahead of the reality. When it filled but a room, he saw already vast halls in which the life of the entire globe was displayed to view—"a world in miniature." From first to last he thought of it as a school—"Great School of Nature"—and longed to use the word "Temple," too, but dared not quite.

The influence of the American Philosophical Society and of individual members was evident throughout the history of the Museum. This association, more than anything else, held Peale to his serious purpose. As the collection increased, so also did its income and the temptation to abandon scientific exposition for pure showmanship. The official relationship was broken in later years, but the influence endured. Peale's serious determination to found a museum had coincided with his election to the Society in 1786. Two years later, he was chosen one of its Curators. But his interest was in his own collection, and he did little to aid the growth of the Society's. In the newspapers of January, 1792, and in broadside form, he published an address "To the Citizens of the United States of America" which first reflects his ambition to create an institution of his own, in his mind's eye the greatest educational force in the nation. "Having," he announced, "formed a design to establish a MUSEUM, by a Collection, Arrangement, and Preservation of the Objects of Natural History, and things useful and curious," he had evolved a system for the preservation of mounted specimens in the American climate, and brought together a collection organized in the "Linnaean method."

Animated by the generous patronage he has already received, and by the magnitude of the object, which he fondly hopes will procure the attention of the public, he now respectfully solicits their aid to enable him to raise this tender plant, until it shall grow into full maturity, and become a *National Museum*.

With harmony little things become great: all the splendid Museums of the great European nations have risen from the foundations laid by individuals. America has in this a conspicuous advantage over all other countries, from the novelty of its vast territories. But a small number is yet known of the amazing variety of animal, vegetable and mineral productions, in our forests of 1000 miles, our inland seas, our many rivers, that roll through several states, and mingle with the ocean.

A Museum stored with these treasures must indeed become one of the first in the world; the more so, as the principal naturalists in Europe, will be anxious to acquire

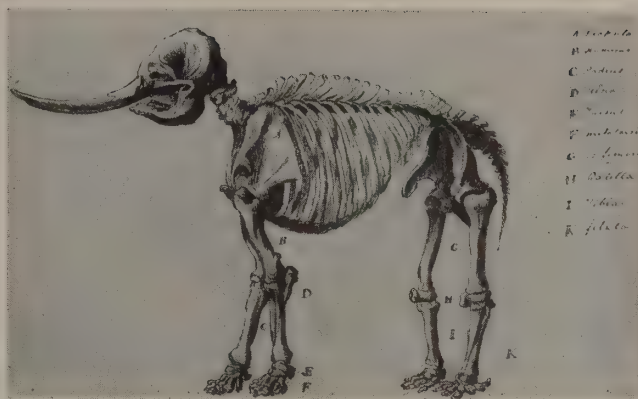


FIG. 3. The "Mammoth." A pen drawing by Rembrandt Peale owned by the Society. The Peales in their first restoration of a complete skeleton of the American mastodon erred on many points, particularly in their exaggeration of the height of the animal. At the same time, their work won deserved acclaim from scientists and won international fame for the Museum.

our productions, by an exchange of whatever is most valuable in their respective countries and foreign colonies.

Mr. Peale means personally to solicit the assistance of gentlemen whose regard for science is well known: if there are those who would become *Inspectors* or *Visitors* of the Museum, their united aid and influence, he is confident, would greatly promote a design that is truly worthy of American patriots and citizens of the world.

Peale never abandoned this vision of a national museum—but, unhappily, never abandoned either his proprietary rights. In 1792 the Museum was already contributing well to his support. Soon it would make him independent, and then, rich. Only trustee ownership could serve the ideal. The "Board of Visitors," a distinguished group certainly, met under the chairmanship of Thomas Jefferson, but with a lack of enthusiasm as obvious as its lack of power to control the institution's policy. The attempt came to nothing, but there was compensation in Peale's tireless, omnivorous collecting. Institutional organization was forgotten until the Museum's fortunes had begun to wane, some thirty years later. In the meantime, it received aid and recognition from the Philosophical Society, from the State of Pennsylvania, from the United States.

In the summer of 1794, the Society leased to Peale all but two rooms of its newly-completed Philosophical Hall [B, IV]. The arrangement was one of mutual advantage. Peale had not only his collection, but his living quarters, in the building. He served, in return, as the Society's Librarian and Curator. Soon after, he announced his retirement from portrait painting—occasionally returning to his profession thereafter, but painting chiefly for the Museum gallery. He continued to add "distinguished characters" to that part of the collection, but new faces of another sort were now appearing—the white Negro, the horn-breasted man, or centenarians in reflection of Peale's belief that the natural life of man was about a century and a half. The old

portrait gallery, from which all the rest had emerged, originally an appeal to patriotism, now represented *Homo sapiens* in the "Linnaean method."

The greatest event in the Museum's history came in the spring of 1801 from Peale's chance reading in the current *Medical Repository* of a discovery of mastodon bones by an Ulster County, New York, farmer. He at once set out for the spot, and purchased from John Masten the nearly complete skeleton he had dragged from his marl pit, with the right to exhume the remainder. Since the first exploration of the continent, no problem had so caught the imagination of scholars

tion—himself, his son, Rembrandt, Mr. Fenton, the Museum assistant, and Dr. James Woodhouse of the University of Pennsylvania. Tents, pumps, and other equipment were purchased in New York, on the way. The work was aided by a continuous throng of spectator-volunteers, whose presence augured well for the financial success of the discovery. Three skeletons were found at neighboring sites, brought back to Philadelphia, and the mounting of the best example begun at once.

When it was at last opened to the public (at a special price) the populace surged in. After all, it was a reve-



FIG. 4. State House Yard, 1800. By William Birch. Over the door of Philosophical Hall in the center background a sign reads, "MUSEUM." Two years later the Museum expanded into the State House itself, occupying all the upper floors. The tower chamber with round windows became the "Marine Room." The floor above that housed the Peale gas works of 1816. Courtesy of Fairmount Park Art Association.

and public alike than the fragments of gigantic bones that had been found here and there—relics of "the great American incognitum," but whether that term included one monster or many no one knew. A naturalist's interest in Dr. Morgan's specimens had brought them to Peale's studio and led to the founding of his museum. Now he had in his possession remains far more complete than Morgan's, and, within reach, a final solution of the mystery.

He brought his accession to Philadelphia, and there hastily organized, with the financial backing of the Philosophical Society, America's first scientific expedi-

lation with a hundred years of conjecture and anticipation behind it. Compare it to the latter-day opening of "King Tut's" tomb, which made "Luxor" a profitable trade name overnight. So Peale's discovery brought "mammoth" into our language as synonymous with anything great, large, spacious, noble, American. We liked to think of ourselves in terms of bigness, and it was in part the intense patriotism of that day that made the spectacle so satisfactory. To Peale, his "mammoth" remained "the mammoth," regardless of Cuvier's distinction between mammoth and mastodon. His imagination, with all this, was soaring toward that vision of a



FIG. 5. The State House. The Chestnut Street front of Independence Hall in 1815, from an unfinished engraving by Alexander Lawson after a painting by John Lewis Krimmel. The sign over the central door reads, "PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM." The "Long Room," the heart of the Museum, extended the entire length of the second floor front. The scene shows an election, almost the only purpose for which the rooms unoccupied by Peale were used.

national university with the Museum at its center, in a building that covered an entire city block. He had Benjamin H. Latrobe design him such an edifice. It must have seemed but a poor approach to his dream when the Legislature of Pennsylvania, unanimously, and in a resolution praising fulsomely his achievements, granted him, rent free, the upper floors of Independence Hall and the occasional use of the rooms below. It gave him not only ample floor space, but the best location in the city, and it opened for the Philadelphia Museum a period of prolonged prosperity.

The heart of the Museum was now the "Long Room" that reaches from end to end of the building on the Chestnut Street front. Its principal feature was Peale's truly great collection of birds, the cases with their brightly-painted backgrounds set up opposite the windows, with a close double row of portraits above. Minerals and the large collection of insects were also in this room, and the "Physiognotrace," at which visitors could draw their own silhouettes. Mammals were displayed in the side rooms. Marine life enjoyed the shady solitude of the tower chamber. The mastodon skeleton re-

mained in Philosophical Hall together with various special exhibits. Peale's hope that larger quarters might make possible a more logical arrangement was only partly realized, as a flood of new gifts soon filled all available space. Thomas Jefferson, always a friend, made the Museum a government depository for much material of great importance, including the collections of the Lewis and Clark expedition, thus compensating as far as he could for his unwillingness to support the idea of a national endowment.

In 1810, with his seventieth year approaching, the proprietor of the Museum retired to a farm in Germantown, turning over its management to one of his sons, Rubens Peale. The Museum was then earning some ten thousand dollars a year—an extremely good income for any business in that day—and Rubens, a business man, had no other interest than to sustain and increase the proceeds. Under his administration, the place became more attractive but more superficial. The music, introduced by his father as a background to "nature's harmony," took the form of popular programs, and lectures popularizing the wonders of science were featured.

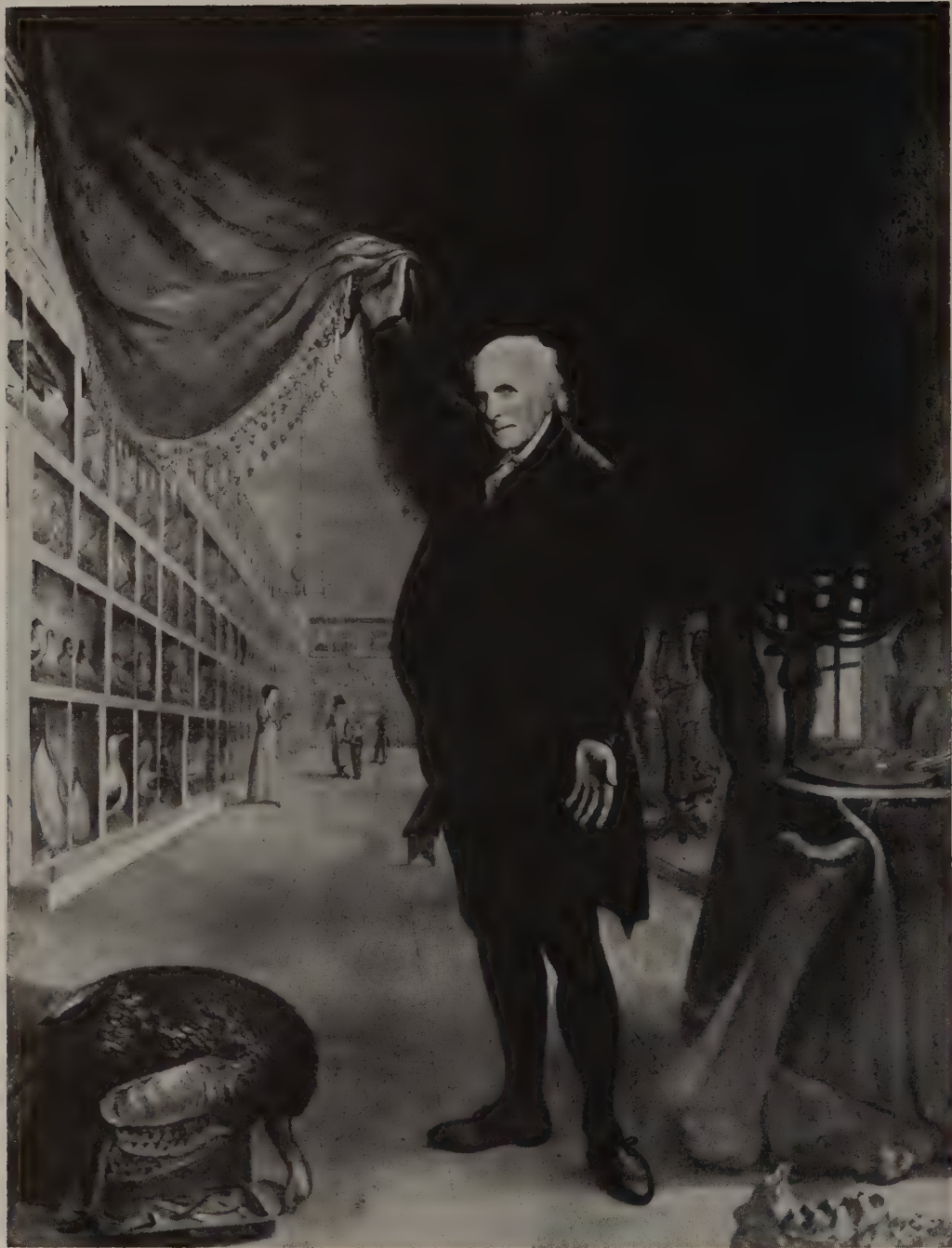


FIG. 6. "The Artist in His Museum." This self-portrait, now owned by the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, was painted in 1822, the artist's eighty-first year, as a gift to the Philadelphia Museum and as a monument to his own career. Palette and brushes on the table behind him show that these were laid aside for the Museum, while the hand raising the curtain symbolizes the years given to revealing to the public the "wonders of nature." The background is an accurate view of the Museum's "Long Room" in Independence Hall, save that the mastodon skeleton, shown at the right, was never exhibited there. Two of the mastodon bones that led to the founding of the Museum are in the right foreground. Too far to the left to appear clearly in this reproduction is the paddlefish, first object presented to the Museum.

On evenings the rooms were open as a genteel "promenade," offering both music and the still rare pleasure of walking by night in a brightly-lighted room.

The Museum's opulence reached its peak in 1816 when father and son, working together, replaced the whale oil lamps used in these "illuminations" with gas light—the first seen by the American public. But in the same year, Independence Hall was bought from the state by the city and, for the first time, the Peales were obliged to pay rent. The public was no longer willing to subsidize what now appeared to be no more than a very profitable private business. In 1819, the city councils required the removal of the gas works in the tower, which, verily, had daily threatened the building with destruction by fire.

The decline of the Philadelphia Museum had begun. Such a collection needs constant expenditure for care, replacement, and growth. For years, money had rarely been spent for anything but sensational new exhibits, whose display could be counted on to stimulate attendance and return the investment in short order. Peale, in 1820, sought to meet the crisis by restoring his institution's character as a place of education rather than of entertainment. It was incorporated as a stock company under an act of February 1, 1821, which provided not only for a board of trustees but for a Faculty of eminent authorities who were to deliver regular courses of lectures. The city responded to this by a material reduction in the rent. But only the ending of all proprietary claims, perhaps not even that, could have saved the Museum. Peale was aging, his family large and clamorous, and a transfer to a non-profit basis seems never to have been considered. After his death in 1827 the efforts to give it new life were in the direction of popularization. As a "School of Nature," it had stood alone, the first of its kind. As entertainment, it could not meet the current competition.

The key to the Museum's financial success had been a public whose Protestant inhibitions denied it the theater, who saw a taint in any form of amusement for amusement's sake. Looking at curiosities, gazing at the wonderful and varied handiwork of their Creator was, to these people, a moral and respectable use of time simultaneously giving improvement and pleasure. This was the key to its success and also to its fall, for the economic possibilities of the thing became apparent at once, competition springing up in Philadelphia and imitators in every town from Maine to the Carolinas. All these fol-

lowed the original Peale pattern: pictures, mostly portraits, plus natural curiosities. But these others, unencumbered from the first by any serious ideal, stressed entertainment more and more and watered down the educational pretense as fast as it was safe to do so—culminating in the great Barnum enterprises, the freak show, titillating humbuggery, and the "museum" that was in all but name a variety hall or theater.

All imitators were not of the trivial sort. Cincinnati, for instance, under the leadership of Dr. Daniel Drake, sought to organize its cultural life on the exact model of Philadelphia, with colleges reinforced by a museum of identical pattern. That museum met the same fate, proving again that true science could not be popularized on an admission charge alone. Yet for at least three decades the Philadelphia Museum had given a tremendous impetus to the new science of natural history, by familiarizing the public with it and by amassing materials of great accumulated value to the student—had made a vital contribution to the intellectual life of Philadelphia, to the place which Philadelphia held so long as the center of the development of the arts and sciences in America, and to American culture as a whole.

REFERENCES

The principal sources for the history of the Philadelphia Museum are the Peale Papers in the Library of the Society, covering every phase of its development, and at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania the Museum accession book ("Memoranda of the Philadelphia Museum"), listing acquisitions from 1805, Museum account books, and C. W. Peale's own description, "A Walk with a Friend through the Philadelphia Museum."

Throughout the life of the Museum, Philadelphia newspapers contain current announcements of all sorts, many of which were issued separately as handbills or circulars. Chief of the latter was the *Guide to the Philadelphia Museum*, first published in 1804, and given to every visitor through subsequent years. For a long period the Museum had its own press in operation. Two serial publications were printed but discontinued for lack of subscribers, the *Scientific and Descriptive Catalogue* of 1796, and *The Philadelphia Museum, or Register of Natural History*, of 1824. Objective first-hand descriptions of the Museum appear in almost every volume of travels touching on Philadelphia in the Museum's heyday.

A full bibliography and more complete chronicle will be found in C. C. Sellers' *Charles Willson Peale* (2 v. *Mem. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 23, 1947), and a full record of the Museum portrait gallery in his *Portraits and Miniatures by Charles Willson Peale* (*Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 42 (1), 1952).

THE ATHENAEUM

Some Account of its History from 1814 to 1850

ARTHUR M. KENNEDY

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"TOWARDS the close of the year 1813, several young men, willing to establish a set of Reading Rooms in the city of Philadelphia, commenced a subscription for that purpose. Much exertion was used to enlarge the list of subscribers, and an address was prepared and published in order to call the attention of the Publick to the design. Upwards of one hundred subscribers having been obtained, a meeting was held on the 9th of February, 1814, [and] Articles of a Constitution . . . adopted."

So ran the notice of the new society in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser* for February 11, 1814. The name chosen was revealed to be "The Athenaeum," the name adopted by a like-minded group in Boston in 1807 and in Salem in 1810—the name whereby, in ancient Greece, temples dedicated to Pallas Athena, goddess of Wisdom and Learning and of the useful and fine arts, were known. The officers elected were the Honorable William Tilghman, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, president; James Mease, M.D., vice president; Roberts Vaux, treasurer; and a board of twelve: Messrs. Nicholas Biddle, Benjamin Chew, Jr., Alexander S. Coxe, Daniel W. Coxe, William H. Dillingham, Samuel Ewing, James Gibson, John Cole Lowber, Robert H. Smith, Jonah Thompson, Thomas I. Wharton, and Richard C. Wood, men well known in the literary and social life of the city.

These gentlemen met again on Saturday, February 12, at the Philosophical Hall, at which time they appointed Robert H. Smith secretary; considered without action an application from one John Fanning Watson, a bookseller, to act as the society's agent; appointed a committee to draft "Bye Laws for the government of the officers," another for "the government of the Rooms," and still another to obtain the rooms to be governed. Most important of all, "the Treasurer was requested to collect the subscriptions immediately." Presumably, this feat was accomplished with reasonable promptness, for two suitable rooms on the second floor of Mathew Carey's building, on the south-east corner of Fourth and Chestnut streets [D, IV], were rented, furnished and, within the space of three weeks, thrown open to the subscribers. This was on March 5. Thus in less than three months from the informal meeting at the home of the educator-philanthropist Roberts Vaux, at 79 Mulberry Street (Arch near Third), the dream of "a set of Reading Rooms" had become reality and with so many demanding the privilege of subscribing that by June a third room was found necessary, and before the end of the fiscal year there were 396 names on the roll,

a response which becomes understandable when we recall the times and the circumstances.

PHILADELPHIA IN 1814

Great Britain and the United States were at war, but to many on both sides of the Atlantic the crushing defeat of Napoleon by the allies in the battles around Leipsic, in October, 1813, seemed to usher in an era of peace wherein only that which is good could happen. Added to this great news, which came on December 30, 1813, when "the British flag of truce *Bramble*, forty-two days out from Plymouth, reached Annapolis with the London papers," was a despatch she carried from Lord Castlereagh offering to treat directly for peace. These auspicious events eclipsed, momentarily, the recurring disasters of the land war, and we find Philadelphians expressing their joy and satisfaction in them by means of a great public meeting and dinner.¹ Therefore it was in an atmosphere electric with hope for the future that the "several young men," armed with their prepared "address," had succeeded, in January, in obtaining the "upwards of one hundred" initial subscribers.

One of the "young men," but older than the rest, Dr. James Mease, who had received his medical diploma from the University of Pennsylvania twenty-two years previously and had acquired a well-deserved reputation as physician, scientist and author—a member of the American Philosophical Society since 1802 and a frequent contributor to its discussions—has left us in *The Picture of Philadelphia* a view of America's principal city as it was at this time and for a considerable period thereafter:

The city is lighted by 1132 lamps inclosed in glass lanterns, most of them lighted only on those nights when the moon does not give sufficient light. The improved parts are paved with round stones brought from the bed of the Delaware at Trenton Falls . . . and the degree of the uniformity of the brick houses has always appeared a striking defect to intelligent strangers.

Among the causes for the excellent state of the public health he credits: The general abolition of hot family suppers, the substitution of malt liquors for punch, the use of flannels, the universal use of umbrellas and the increased use of high crowned hats, "which have lessened the diseases arising from the operation of the sun." Consequently, the commanding position of the hatters in his enumeration of the town's activities must have given the good doctor a great deal of satisfaction:

¹ McMaster, John Bache, *A history of the people of the United States*, 4: 224, N. Y., Appleton, 1895.

Three libraries,² four banks, six schools, eight daily papers, eleven insurance companies, thirteen charitable institutions, forty-three places of religious worship, fifty-one printers, one hundred and two hatters! There were thirty-two watchmen to cry the hour and six whose business it was to see that they did; and, lest the distaff side of the community feel left out of the "picture," he notes 3,648 spinning wheels, and that housewives may buy milk on Sundays "till nine of the clock."

We are told that the rooms first occupied were "lit in the evening only by candles until, in May, 1815, a large brass lamp with four lights was purchased and hung in the front room." "Scanty and insignificant" were the resources and creature comforts of those early days, remarked Thomas Wharton (of the original board of managers) many years later; but the earnest desire for the better things of life as represented by this new educational opportunity was not to be denied and they entered zestfully upon the adventure. Only sixty days after the first meeting of the managers, in February, 1814, the Athenaeum's own *Journal of Politics, Literature and Science* was begun, and in June it pleased the board, although struggling to assemble a few good books for their new Reading Room, to donate "a number of American publications not to exceed one hundred dollars" to the Liverpool Athenaeum. The reason for this generous gesture is not given, but it must have been in grateful acknowledgment of encouragement received—such as had been extended, earlier, to the Boston Athenaeum—from this the first of the English Athenaeums (1798).³ In any case, the friendly move is pleasant to contemplate, even though it proved to be inexpedient, ultimately, actually to make the gift. However, it is of record that, in July, 1815, the Committee on Purchases was directed to "collect and transmit to the Manchester Athenaeum regular files of the *Aurora* and *Gazette of the United States*." In this way the debt to England was repaid.

On April 5, 1815, the Supreme Court of the State of Pennsylvania granted the charter. The constitution was signed by 147 members, some of whom were members of the Library Company also.

A PLACE OF COMMON RESORT

To this city of some 120,000 people,⁴ constituted as we have seen it to be, came the Athenaeum with its news gathered from distant countries, its unusual opportunities for self-improvement, its good company both of humankind and of books; and the managers, in their opening "Address to the Publick," made its literary nature very clear: It was to be a "reading room to contain the newspapers and periodical publications of Philadel-

phia and those of merit from other States . . . a library of general reference, particularly of such original and valuable works as are not generally found in other libraries," together with popular lectures and a museum.

But the desire for human companionship was much in mind also. The unofficial prospectus used by the "young men" in their initial "exertion" deplored "the want of a convenient place of common resort" where their leisure hours could be passed "without danger to morals or tastes." Yet, either indifferent to the danger or courting it, the managers had intriguingly progressive ideas concerning books of fiction, such as were generally frowned upon elsewhere, but bought in Philadelphia from the beginning. The catalogue of 1820 reveals them standing on the shelves without shame in close proximity to state papers and reports, religious and medical tracts, political pamphlets, orations, eulogiums, poems, treatises on the drama, law and banking, and we find, among other titles: *The Bandit Bride*, whose unbridled banditry fills three exciting volumes; *Chit-Chat of Paris* (very racey); *Night Mare Abbey*, all-too-plainly a forerunner of the modern "whodunit"; *Women*, a mystery in two wholly inconclusive volumes; and *Father as He Should Be*, with but two volumes devoted to his reformation, which seems very remarkable indeed. Whatever the lamentable effect on their morals or tastes, the new reading room was popular.

BOSTON AND PHILADELPHIA

At Boston, in May, 1807, a committee of the newly-formed Athenaeum had "respectfully submitted to the friends of improvement"⁵ a learned, eloquent and lengthy pamphlet on the value of learning in general and of culture to the individual in particular, reassuringly setting forth that "the satisfactions offered tend to strengthen, not debilitate, the mind, to subdue, not inflame, the passions,"⁶ and that "while it may be recommended as a place of social intercourse, it will principally be useful as a source of information and a means of intellectual improvement and pleasure. It is to be a fountain at which all who choose may gratify their thirst for knowledge."⁷

In brief, it was their high hope through the cultivation of the individual to elevate the community, a public-spirited ideal which, as all the world knows, has been highly successful.

But the good people of Philadelphia, with ideals no less lofty, seem to have been content to confine their ambition to providing their duly elected members with good reading matter "not usually found in other libraries."

The corporate concept, however, is the same, namely, membership by election, the purchase of a qualifying

² The Library Company, the Loganian, the Friends.

³ Quincy, Josiah, *The history of the Boston Athenaeum*, 37, Cambridge, Metcalf, 1851.

⁴ Mease, James, *The picture of Philadelphia*, 37, Phila., B. & T. Kite, 1811.

⁵ Quincy, *op. cit.*, 25.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 30.

share of stock, which is "inheritable personal property," and the payment of dues.

THE PROSPECTIVE BUILDING

The Society was early desirous to possess a building of its own. Every annual report referred to it. That submitted in February, 1819, voiced this desire as follows:

The apartments now occupied are not sufficiently spacious for the comfortable accommodation of our numerous visitors; it is therefore highly desirable that the treasury department authorize the directors to erect an edifice of chaste and simple architecture, conveniently situated and of ample dimensions to accommodate the several literary and scientific societies which adorn our city. . . . If, therefore, the liberality of the public could be induced to place the corner stone, it would be the ambition of the directors to raise a superstructure which, while it exhibited a pure specimen of classic elegance, would, with its accumulated treasures, become the pride and ornament of Philadelphia.

It is doubtful whether John Notman, the celebrated architect whose plans won in the competition twenty-five years later, ever saw these early specifications; but that he carried out their spirit in the building he created in 1847 is certain.

Dr. William Lehman, Jr., of Germantown, the member whose generous bequest of ten thousand dollars in 1829 started the fund which, in time, made the "edifice of chaste and simple architecture" possible, was a successful man of business and a useful member of the Legislature, yet found (or made) the time to "continue all his life a hard student and a constant and universal reader" to such an extent that "he left behind him five or six thousand 'copy books' filled with extracts from works which he had perused, and accompanied with his own comments and illustrations." His motto was: *Studium sine calamo somnum*: If you read without a pencil in your hand, you might as well be sound asleep.

The annual report of 1820 was ordered to be printed in the newspapers and filled four full-page columns of fine print. Under the family lamp it could easily have taken all the evening to read it. But that it paid to advertise seems clear from President Tilghman's report of 1822 which will follow in due course.

THE SEAL

Now the managers had long desired a corporate seal but took no action before August, 1820, the interval having been fully occupied, as we know, with the gathering together of all things needful and the writing of reports and addresses, and of rules and regulations, mostly as to who should be admitted and on what terms. At this meeting, however, the Honorable Peter Stephen Du Ponceau, the distinguished lawyer, to whom the selection of a seal had been entrusted, reported, and the beautiful seal (substantially as shown in the illustration) was adopted.

The design was copied from the title page of one of de Montfaucon's *L'Antiquité Expliquée*, published in Paris in 1777, ten magnificent volumes of which were in the Athenaeum library. But that the board gave its ready approval might have been less in recognition of the obvious excellence of the choice than in sincere tribute to the man; for, with most unlaunderlike disregard of the generally accepted notion that an official seal should bear the corporate name, he had reversed the title to agree with the usage of other Athenaeums in showing their place names first, and the seal as approved read, not The Athenaeum of Philadelphia, but The Philadelphia Athenaeum.

While this bold innovation was in keeping with Du Ponceau's flair for the unusual and the engaging personality which had enabled him at the moment of setting foot on America (December 1, 1777), a lad of seven-



FIG. 1.

teen, to kiss the first woman he met and get away with it on a bet,⁸ it reveals, also, the broad-mindedness of his fellow-members of the board, headed by William Tilghman, president (and later to be, as was Du Ponceau also, president of the American Philosophical Society), who obviously believed, with Du Ponceau, that, so long as the Society was sufficiently identified, one need not be too technical about the arrangement of the words—that the important thing was to be completely identified with the Athenaeum movement. And this unconventional but practical way of looking at it must have squared with Mr. Tilghman's conscience, for the famous Philadelphia lawyer, Horace Binney, a charter member of the Athenaeum, when called upon, in 1827, to pronounce the eulogium on Tilghman's passing, remarked

⁸ Palmer, John McAuley, *General Von Steuben*, 111, New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1937.

the justice's "veneration for the common law, his disregard of mere *dicta*, his statements embodying common-sense," and noted that "on going the circuits he invariably carried with him his Bible, some recent treatise of the law and some Latin author." Such a man would not have slept o' nights had there been anything really wrong with the Athenaeum's seal.

Thus it would seem that the board's acceptance of it, although technically incorrect, was with due deliberation and early set the pattern for a certain unconventionality in the conduct of the society's affairs. There is a charm about so sane and livable an attitude of mind which is interesting, human and vital—which preserves the amenities that make for gracious living and, in the present instance, goes far to explain the genuine affection for this institution and its ways that has characterized many generations of Athenaeum families; and it all began back in 1820 when a learned, amiable, and light-hearted Frenchman, who had declined more honors than he accepted, stood the corporate name on its head, and a wise-hearted Chief Justice smiled and looked the other way.

In 1828 Du Ponceau followed Tilghman as president and served in that capacity for sixteen years, and the seal of his choice served with him. But after he was gone some marjory discovered that, although the Athenaeum was unaccountably prospering, it didn't deserve to, for, with the corporate name not its corporate name, it had fallen into sin. Whereupon, the beautiful representation of its titulary goddess was defaced and discontinued; and thereafter for nearly one hundred years the society's seal was the simple, unadorned seal of the notary public, no more, no less, completely devoid of any distinction whatever. Now, in this later time, Du Ponceau's seal of 1820 has come into its own again—and this time technically correct.

GRADUALLY INCREASING IN STRENGTH

Mr. Tilghman personally wrote the annual report submitted in 1822, part of which follows:

It may be gratifying to the Stockholders to be informed that the number of Strangers introduced during the last year, who had the benefit of the rooms without compensation, was about a Thousand and eighteen. On the whole, the Directors have had the satisfaction of perceiving that, notwithstanding the pressure which has been felt by people of all ranks, during the last three years, this Institution has been extending its roots, and gradually increasing in strength and usefulness.

And fortune continued to smile. At the meeting held November 13, 1822, the Committee of Purchases reported having acquired from Mr. William Duane "148 volumes of Dr. Franklin's bound pamphlets; the *Aurora* from 1790 to 1821 inclusive, *National Intelligencer* 1800-1815; and 8 volumes *Pennsylvania Gazette* for Two hundred and Sixty Dollars," payable in installments over nine months. We read that "On motion,

the report was adopted," as well it might have been; for these items, which were practically a gift and included Franklin's personal copy of the *Gazette*, with marginal notes in his own hand, were priceless. In the contentment of mind arising from the possession of such treasures the society pursued "its useful, but quiet and unpretending course" for more than fifty years. Imagine, then, the disappointment when, at the moment of showing them to visitors to the Centennial Exposition, it was discovered that the more valuable portion had been stolen! What remained was sold to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania for safe keeping.

Even though the "large brass lamp with four lights" gallantly supplemented the candles (gas, which would make the rooms "as light as day," was not to come until 1838), it had been in something of a dim, religious light, if in the evening, and in a chilly atmosphere, despite the hospitable efforts of the open wood fires, that the more than five hundred members and their guests had been crowding into the Athenaeum, and we may feel sure that to the majority at least (although probably not to all, for it was a decided innovation), the coal stoves introduced during the winter of 1822-1823 were welcome. In their genial warmth and in comparative comfort one could, now, dispute possession of his favorite among the "fifty newspapers and thirty-six literary and scientific journals regularly subscribed for," or browse among the more than twenty-five hundred volumes which had been got together and had been catalogued by the new librarian, William M. McIlhenny, Jr. In this year, 1823, the rooms occupied were those covering the entire first floor of Philosophical Hall and represented a most desirable expansion from the two north rooms on the same floor previously leased from Thomas Sully, the artist. The chess tables having been placed in the *southeast* corner, no mystery attaches to the placing of the so-called "conversation room" in the *northwest* corner; but where, in that rather limited space, room was found to display the large collection of minerals loaned by the well-known geologist Peter A. Browne, author of *A Profile of the Rocks Between Philadelphia and Norristown*, is less easily understood. It is certain, however, that the "plaister" busts of political heroes and literary masters, the handiwork of the talented William Rush—that of Charles Thomson had recently been repaired at a cost of six dollars—which lent an air of dignity and importance to the place, must have looked benignly down upon an animated scene and a feast of good reading spread out on the tables grouped about the rooms; for in February, 1824, the board reported: "Our rooms are always filled with readers, and during fifteen hours of each day the publications on our tables are disseminating knowledge and yielding amusement"; and the report of 1825 notices the educational value of the magazines for which the Athenaeum was already famous:

Periodical publications reporting inventions, discoveries and improvements, as canals and rail roads, steam engines

and weaving machines, are now the channels through which in all countries the human mind discharges itself. More such periodicals are perhaps to be found in our rooms than in any other library in the city.

By 1828 the Athenaeum was regularly subscribing for eighty-one American newspapers. Often was it said of a rare book in those days, "You may find that at the Athenaeum"; and Thomas Wharton has reported: "I remember hearing Mr. Jeffrey, the accomplished and thoroughly informed editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, say that he found here literary and scientific journals of his own country that he had never seen in Europe."

ORIGINAL PURPOSE ADHERED TO

Clearly enough, the Athenaeum of that day was, as it was originally intended to be, a reading room, a treasure house, least of all a circulating library. So long ago as 1816 a proposal to lend books to members had been voted down, nor will the idea meet with favor until 1855.

"The Athenaeum took no part, apparently, in the literary life of the time," observed one who knew his subject well.⁹

When it is remembered that the first half of the nineteenth century was a time of real literary activity, this institution as an organization seems to have lost an opportunity to contribute something of permanent value to the culture of the city. Its purpose was and is the maintaining of a reading room and library. Philadelphians have an unwillingness to depart from the faith and practices of founders, and there has been no departure from the original purpose.

And being so typically Philadelphian, it has always been (as with many another "Philadelphia institution") better known elsewhere than in the city of its birth. A century ago "respectable strangers," properly introduced, visited the Athenaeum in very respectable numbers. The quaint *Record of Strangers* contains the names of many of the distinguished statesmen and authors of the day. Not a few visitors coming as "strangers" remained as members and are represented by their descendants on the roll today side by side with those whose forebears were among the founding fathers.

SAMUEL BRECK

When the Brecks removed from Boston to Philadelphia in 1792 young Samuel, just turned twenty-one, came with his parents, married and built lovely "Sweetbriar" on the banks of the Schuylkill. His name appears among the earliest visitors to the new Reading Room, in July, 1814, but his active interest may not have begun until 1825, when the Marquis de Lafayette visited Philadelphia and on July 18 was voted an honorary member, the only person so honored by the society down to the present time; for, although Benjamin Tilghman,

⁹ H. S. Prentiss Nichols, Esq., *Annual Athenaeum address*, February 5, 1934.

the president's cousin, offered the resolution, his friend Breck, now an influential member of Congress (who as a boy in 1783 had idolized the general when he was his father's house guest in Boston), may have been the moving spirit. At least it is permissible to suggest that this happy thought, which honored both the Athenaeum and his father's friend, may have come from him.

However that may be, he shortly thereafter presented the library with one of the handsomest collections of books it ever received, was given, in return, a share of stock and a life membership and, in 1833, elected to the board. After serving for six years, he was re-elected in 1845 and was, that same year, chosen president to succeed Peter Stephen Du Ponceau, deceased, in which capacity he officiated, on November first, at the laying of the corner stone of the society's fine new building on Washington Square [B, V], which, in the fond hope of twenty-six years earlier, was to become "the pride and ornament of Philadelphia." He concluded his address on that occasion with these words, characteristic of the man:

To that Being without Whose support our corner stone would rest on shifting sand we look, in deep humility, for prolonged assistance in our present work. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

The advent of the long-heralded building seemed to justify renewed confidence in the Athenaeum's future, and we find the board, in 1846, exempting from dues all "extra" shares which the corporation's stockholders had added and were adding to their holdings.

The following year the society took possession of the building, "a structure," as president Breck described it, "without tawdry decoration or exceeding our ability to pay." This able and gracious man served as president until his death in 1862. Born in 1771, his useful life had spanned "the vast arch of history" from Washington to Lincoln.

NOT EVERYONE WAS HAPPY

But at least one member was not in favor of leaving Philosophical Hall for unfamiliar surroundings however elegant. He kept a diary, and this is what he confided to it on the fateful day:

Monday, October 18th, 1847 Went to the inauguration of the new Athenoem [*sic*]. The Library was crowded and T. I. Wharton delivered a poor oration full as usual of bombast, little pedlingtonisms, conceit. . . . All the elegance of the edifice by no means reconciles me to the change . . . my only comfort is that we shall carry old McIlhenny and the steady old habitudes along with us to our new home. Tho the former will almost lose himself in losing that old nook littered with loose literature when he emerges, spectacles in hand, to answer an inquiry. And the chess habitudes will at least for a time play much worse away from their snug and crowded corner. . . . *In honore veteris Athenoei, Scribo elegium ejus.*

This cheerful enthusiast in the Army of Progress and authority on "loose literature" may have been un-



FIG. 2. Main reading room.

happy over the change of scene, but he must have approved at least that portion of Mr. Wharton's address which assured his distinguished audience, sensitive, as we are sure it was, to the safeguarding of all that is virtuous and good, that "those wretched publications with which city and country, steamboats, cars and hotels are deluged—cheap, plausible, popular—will never find their way to the tables of the Athenaeum." We hope he *did* approve, and that if it were he who disfigured

the *Record of Strangers* with "*Vita sine litteris mores est: It's the devil to be without the papers,*" he lived to regret it.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS NOT FORGOTTEN

Happily it is not forgotten by the members that in a period of world upheaval, affecting the lives and the fortunes of all, the men of 1814 did a notable thing in establishing a society dedicated to the quiet dignity of learning. Such accomplishments would seem to be the natural offspring of times when men have leisure for the peaceful pursuit of the things of the spirit. Yet it was in a time of political and economic uncertainty not unlike the present that this institution became a rallying place for that culture which played an important part in the vital building processes at work in those early days of the republic. In a critical time it was an influential factor in keeping the spirit of letters alive, if not creatively, certainly by the treasuring of "such original and valuable works as are not generally found in other libraries."

By deliberate policy, then, the atmosphere of an earlier day is cherished and maintained about the old building on Washington Square that it may signify to all that the Athenaeum stands, as it has always stood, for values that endure.



FIG. 3. The Athenaeum Building as it appeared in 1854. From *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion*.

THE ACADEMY OF NATURAL SCIENCES OF PHILADELPHIA

MAURICE E. PHILLIPS

Editor, Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia

THE founders of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia held their first meeting on the twenty-fifth of January, 1812. On the evening of that date six gentlemen, Dr. Gerard Troost, Dr. Camillus Macmahon Mann, Messrs. John Speakman, Jacob Gilliams, John Shinn, Jr., and Nicholas Parmentier assembled at Speakman's apothecary shop on the northeast corner of Market and Second Streets [E, II]. The reputation his shop enjoyed for being a center of literary and scientific gossip doubtless accounted in part for the proprietor's interest in founding a natural science organization.

An invitation to this meeting had been issued by Speakman and Gilliams. They are said to have become

weary of holding discussions in public houses where there were many diversions and where sarcastic comments might be expected from the bystanders.

In notes of the first private meeting, it is stated that they had "conjointly proceeded to initiatory business, as well for themselves as for Mr. Thomas Say, absent." Although unable to be present, Thomas Say signed the *Constitutional Act* on March 17 and was then officially enrolled among the founders.

Four accounts of this meeting are included with the early minutes of the Academy. The first contains other names of absent prospective members, i.e., Dr. Samuel Benezet, Dr. Benjamin Kugler, and Dr. Samuel Jackson. But in the copy which has been judged to be the final and revised record, no mention is made of these gentlemen.

Some of the preserved statements relating to the organization of the Society are somewhat ambitious and flowery and represent ideas which are at times quite impractical. One of these suggests its aims in the following words:

Nor is it the least of our hopes that by the communication of our several observations on the operations of mind and of nature, we may have the happiness to promote important sciences, and rescue from heedlessness many valuable facts which are not to be found in books or in the routine discourses of persons who garble the thoughts of other men without using the observing or reasoning power themselves.

Another touches upon the deportment of the members:

It being irreversibly our intention to admit none but persons of gentlemanly manners . . . it cannot enter into our contemplation to suffer the presence or entrance of persons of a contrary deportment. If therefore any person after being admitted a member shall discover himself to be so insensible to propriety at any time in the Society as to insult another, much less to strike, or in or out of the Society, by any act or language to aim disgrace upon the Society, or to reflect disrespect upon any member to strangers, such individual is by this fact itself expelled without debate.

George Ord, eventually to become president of the Academy, later referred to this group of founders as a "club of humorists." However, there seems little in the record of subsequent meetings to warrant such a trivial estimate.

Though these gentlemen obviously took their new venture seriously, previous comparison of ideas had convinced them that they were almost completely ignorant of the rudiments of natural science. They did not think of this as a new profession as they were already gainfully employed. It was suggested, rather, as an avocation since this was to be "a meeting of gentlemen, friends of science and of rational disposure of leisure moments."

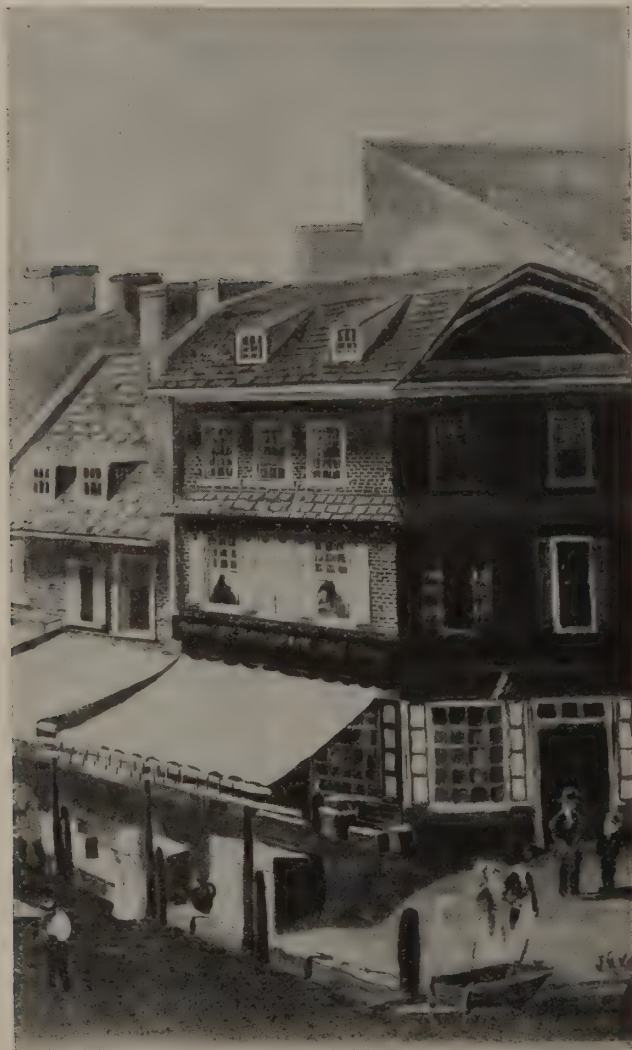


FIG. 1. John Speakman's apothecary shop on the northeast corner of Market and Second Streets, first meeting place of the founders—January 25, 1812.

There was not a naturalist among them, though Say was later characterized by a distinguished Bostonian, Dr. Amos Binney, as "the earliest scientific naturalist that this country had produced." The subsequent influence of Say upon the institution was great, for his boundless enthusiasm for natural history was not only an inspiration to fellow members but helped to hold the society together in its early years. At this time, he was but twenty-five years old and had not yet displayed the talents which made him great. Within five years, however, he was launched on his career, accepting every opportunity to study and describe North American fauna. In a letter to the Rev. John F. Melsheimer, of December 12, 1817, Say refers to his proposed trip to Florida with William Maclure and states that the country was ". . . abounding in insects, etc which are unknown, if they remain unknown I am determined it shall not be my fault."

Philadelphia was at this time a population center of approximately 100,000. Though already the most important scientific center in the United States, there was still relatively little in the general environment to stimulate the foundation of a natural history society.

The nomadic William Bartram and his father John—who had been granted the title of "King's Botanist"—had gained considerable renown as collectors of plants. Their botanical garden at nearby Kingsessing was an attraction to all who professed an interest in the subject. But there were, in fact, few distinguished naturalists in the entire United States.

A student of nature was looked upon as peculiar—an object of merriment rather than of respect; there was nothing to be made out of it. A letter of a few years later, from Dr. Edmund Porter, of New Jersey, expressed the typical attitude of even well-educated people. He had attended an Academy meeting and listened to a paper, read by Charles Lucien Bonaparte, on the golden plover. He reported to his friend that: "To a novice it seems curious that men of the first intellect should pay so much attention to web-footed gentry with wings." This is a quite understandable attitude, however, for there was as yet no yardstick with which to measure the importance of such studies.

There was then, of course, no way of knowing the part that geology and mineralogy would play in the development and use of our natural underground resources; little to indicate the importance of botany to agriculture; nothing to foretell the role of insects in disease and agriculture, or the unlimited possibilities of chemistry and physics. The study of fish had no attraction except from the other end of a fishing pole. Yet studies in these and in many other subjects were soon to be undertaken at the Academy.

A pioneer in its field, the new institution was soon to add stature to the rich cultural development of Philadelphia, and increased force to its claim of being the scientific center of the country. There were few well-

known American naturalists of the next fifty years who were not Academy members, either resident or corresponding. There were few who did not use its publications to record their findings and its collections to aid their research.

The seven gentlemen who had agreed to form a new society for the cultivation of natural sciences may seem an oddly assorted group. In it were included two doctors, a dentist, an apothecary, a manufacturing chemist, a distiller and maker of cordials, and a somewhat impractical young man scarcely yet established, but with a passion for nature. But this association was not entirely illogical when one considers that doctors and apothecaries were closely concerned with the curative effects of plants and herbs.

Disinclined to impose indefinitely upon Mr. Speakman for a place of meeting, the group met from time to time in public houses that first spring. One of these was Mercer's Cake Shop on Market Street, near the intersection of Franklin Place. At the meeting of March 17, a *Constitutional Act* was discussed and tentatively agreed upon. It was at this time also that the name, *Academy of Natural Sciences*, was first used, and this was determined as the official date of founding. This name for the institution had been suggested by Dr. Samuel Jackson, later a professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

Up to this time numerous scientific men, and others, had been consulted relative to the organization of the Society, but no additional members had joined. It had been determined to bar all political and religious discussion at meetings, and some prospective members feared it might injure their reputations to belong to such an organization. Dr. Jackson was one of these. Being a young physician, he felt it might prejudice his practice if it were known that he belonged to a "Godless" society. Some discouragement resulted, and fears were expressed that their new venture might not survive.

In August of this first year, Mr. Speakman, having personally purchased a collection of minerals, the cabinets of Adam Seybert, the first scientifically trained mineralogist, turned it over to the Academy. He converted the \$750.00 he had paid for it into shares of stock which were to be redeemed as soon as circumstances would permit. It is said that the necessity of discharging this financial obligation became a force which helped bind the members together in this critical period.

The first regular meeting place was established in early April, 1812, in a small, second-story room on the east side of Second Street, near Race, then No. 121. The ground floor was occupied as a milliner's shop. In this rented room was placed the nucleus of both the future Museum and the Library. It was here that the Academy elected its first member, John Barnes, M.D., a botanist.

Insignificant as were the Library and Museum, they continued to grow. Larger quarters becoming neces-

sary, Speakman and Say, with the approval of the Academy, rented the dwelling portion of a house at 78 North Second Street. The front second-story room and the one adjoining it were occupied as the "Hall of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia." The ground floor was used as a shop for the sale of iron. To this building the books and specimens were removed during the summer of 1812.

It must be granted that the first year was not one of brilliant accomplishment. By the end of 1812, the Academy had fourteen resident members and thirty-three correspondents. The first officers had been elected. Each of the founding members was given a place on this slate, as follows: Dr. Gerard Troost, President; N. S. Parmentier and John Shinn, Jr., Vice-presidents; John Speakman, Treasurer; Jacob Gilliams, Comptroller; Thomas Say, Curator; and Dr. C. M. Mann, Secretary. Of the new members acquired during the year, William Maclure stands out as the most significant in the future history of the institution.

Dr. Troost, later to become a lecturer at the famous Peale Museum, and a professor in the college of pharmacy, was a native of Holland. He was a student not only of medicine, but of crystallography, chemistry, mineralogy, and geology, and was one of those who accompanied Maclure to New Harmony, Indiana, in 1825, to join in the Owen experiment in communal living. Troost was the only one of the founders who had any claim to a scientific training, and is generally credited today as being the first crystallographer in America.

Nicholas Parmentier was a native of France, and is variously recorded as having been a manufacturer of spermaceti and of cordials. He later moved to Florida, and by 1824 the Academy had lost track of his whereabouts. At that time, his stock in the institution apparently reverted to the Academy because Parmentier could not be found.

John Shinn, Jr., was a manufacturing chemist. In 1806 he had joined the first troop of City Cavalry, and by 1811 he had become a major of the 156th Regiment of Volunteers, and colonel of the 79th regiment in 1814. Soon after the establishment of the Academy in Gilliams Court (1815), he delivered a course of lectures on chemistry. There is also a tradition that at times, in the absence of the regular professor, he gave lectures on that subject in the University of Pennsylvania's medical department.

John Speakman was a member of the Society of Friends, and a native of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. In 1805 he had started in business as an apothecary at his 1812 address. He remained there until about 1815, part of the time in partnership with Thomas Say. He accompanied Maclure to New Harmony in 1825, where he remained until 1829, then returning to Philadelphia. He was, perhaps, more responsible for the establishment of the Academy than any other person, since he had sug-

gested the idea to Gilliams, and together they had issued the invitations to a meeting.

Jacob Gilliams, a native of Philadelphia, was a well-known dentist of the city. He was a close friend of Thomas Say and of the ornithologist Alexander Wilson. These three made frequent visits to the home of William Bartram, and Gilliams attributed his love of nature to these visits. Though the practice of his profession prevented him from engaging in very active work at the Academy, he did publish two papers in the first series of the *Journal*, one on lizards, the other on fishes.

Thomas Say was also a native Philadelphian. It was very fitting that he should have been chosen as the



FIG. 2. Thomas Say. Portrait by Charles Willson Peale, in the Academy of Natural Sciences at Philadelphia. Photo. courtesy of the Frick Art Reference Library.

first Curator, as he was truly characterized as a "born naturalist." Until he went to New Harmony with Maclure, who was his closest friend, there was no member who spent so much time in the study of the Academy's collections, or was in as regular attendance at the meetings. His business partnership with Speakman had failed. Say, in fact, put little into it as Speakman had been willing to do most of the work in order that Say could devote his time to science.

Relatively little is known of the first recording secretary, Dr. C. M. Mann. He went to France from his native Ireland during the rebellion of 1798. His political attachments making his return to Ireland unsafe, he sought refuge in the United States. He lived for a

time in Philadelphia, then moved to Baltimore, where he is said to have edited a paper.

The two following years, 1813 and 1814, saw a slow increase in the confidence of the members in their new enterprise, and a moderate extension of their activities. It had been rather dull going at the meetings. The scarcity of members with training in natural history was a definite obstacle to advance, and many meetings were spent in reading aloud from the encyclopaedia.

In 1813 a code of by-laws was adopted, and in the same year Mr. Say delivered a series of original lectures to the members on the elements of entomology. During these two years, thirty-five new members and twenty-four correspondents were elected. Alexander Wilson was one of these. The publication of his great work on American birds was bringing him fame and also lending impetus to a slowly growing interest in nature.

Other new members of prominence were Doctors John F. Waterhouse and John Barnes. In the Academy minutes of April 19, 1814, is the report of a committee appointed to investigate the propriety of the presentation of a course of lectures on botany "for the ladies of Philadelphia." This report was signed by the Abbé Joseph Correa da Serra, Portuguese minister to this country, then residing in Philadelphia, and a recently elected Academy member. The report was acted upon favorably, and it was resolved that "each member be permitted to introduce one lady except the members lecturing who are privileged to introduce without limitation." As a result of this action, Drs. Waterhouse and Barnes presented the first series of popular lectures on botany ever given in Philadelphia. The Academy quarters being too small, these lectures were delivered in the hall of the Agricultural Society, and were attended by more than two hundred ladies and a considerable number of gentlemen. The unusually large attendance doubtless reflects the fact that few diversions were then considered proper for ladies, and that this was judged to be quite respectable.

One of the best indications that the Society was gaining a foothold is the fact that again in 1814 the members laid plans to move to larger quarters to better accommodate their growing collections and library. On April 25, 1815, the proposition of Gilliams to erect a new building in Gilliams Court, on Arch Street, between Front and Second, was adopted. A lease providing payment of \$200.00 a year was signed, and plans were prepared by the architect, William Strickland. This new building was three stories in height, and contained one good-sized room on each floor. The second and third floors were used for the museum and library, for lectures and meetings, while the ground floor was used for laboratory purposes. Although without architectural pretensions, the building had a measure of dignity, and for a time it was adequate. The Academy moved there in August, 1815.

Up to this time the Academy had operated under the



FIG. 3. The hall in Gilliams Court, on Arch Street, between Front and Second. This was the first building occupied exclusively by the Academy—1815–1826. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

old *Constitutional Act* of March 17, 1812. In 1816 a formal *Constitution* was adopted, and in the following spring an Act of Incorporation was passed by the Pennsylvania legislature.

One of the most important occurrences in the Academy's early history was the election of William Maclure as president, in December, 1817. He was reelected annually until the time of his death in 1840. During this twenty-two-year period, the institution experienced a relative growth and prosperity seldom equaled since. Mr. Maclure was a wealthy man and a liberal philanthropist. As a natural scientist, he was already the leading geologist in America. His single-handed geological survey of the United States, the results of which had been published in the *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, had established him internationally.¹ Though often absent from Philadelphia, Mr. Maclure always interested himself in the affairs of the Academy, and his influence upon it can hardly be overestimated.

¹ Observations on the geology of the United States, explanatory of a geological map. *Trans. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 6 (2): no. LXII: 411–428, 1809. (After additional exploration, this paper was greatly extended, read before the Society on May 16, 1817, and published in the same *Transactions*: 1 (n.s.): 1–91. In the same year the author reprinted it in book form.)



FIG. 4. William Maclure. An engraving by D. C. Hinman. From portrait by Thomas Sully in the Academy of Natural Sciences.

His entire presidency was marked by a series of personal benefactions. At the time of his death the Academy's library might almost have been called the Mac-lurean Library, so much had he contributed to it. He also made significant donations to many departments of the museum, particularly in geology, mineralogy, paleontology, and botany. For twenty-five years he gave an average of over \$1,000 a year in funds.

William Maclure persuaded the members that it would add to the prestige of the institution to issue a scientific publication, and in the spring of 1817 the Academy initiated the first series of its *Journal*. Later historians agreed that this serial did more to establish the scientific standing of the Academy, both at home and abroad, than any other single undertaking. It encountered many financial difficulties in its early years. In an effort to help, Maclure purchased an old printing press which he installed in his home, where various Academy members assisted in setting type and printing parts of the first volume. The *Journal* ran through eight volumes, the last pages appearing in 1842. Among the 237 papers which appeared in it, a wide range of natural history material is to be found. The list of the fifty-six authors whose work appeared there, includes the names of most of the active American naturalists of the time. Mr. Say leads the list in number of contributions, with thirty-three.

The first exchange of copies of the new serial for those of other institutions was made with the American Philosophical Society. This choice of the first exchange institution may have reflected the influence of

Thomas Say, who was curator in both societies at about this time. Thus began for the Academy a method of acquisition of scientific literature from all over the world which has contributed so largely to the growth of its library.

By the close of 1820 the Academy had 100 members and 190 correspondents. After eight years of uncertain existence, it had gained favorable recognition. Further, it had increased in reputation through the distinguished character of some of its new members. Four of them, Isaac Hays, Isaac Lea, Samuel George Morton, and George Ord, were later to be presidents of the institution.

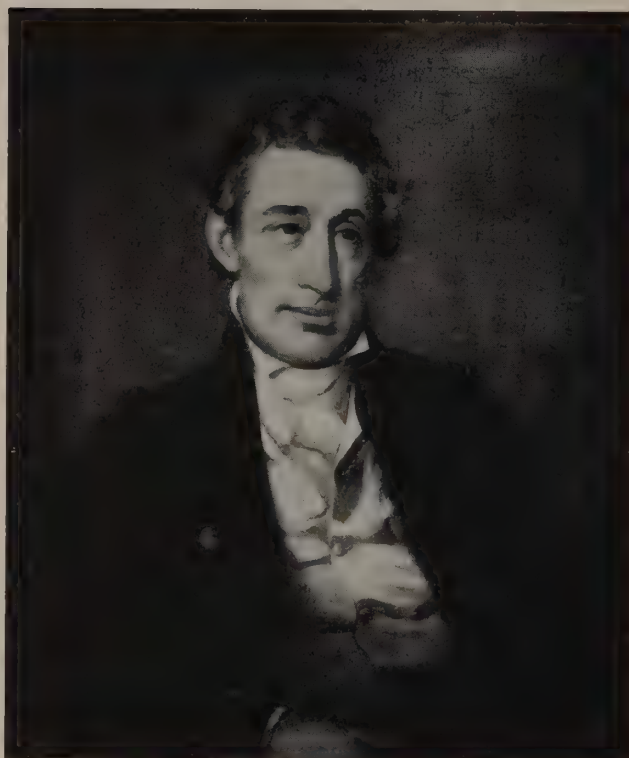


FIG. 5. George Ord. Portrait by T. Henry Smith after John Nagle, in the Hall of the American Philosophical Society.

Isaac Hays was a very distinguished physician and surgeon and was later to engage extensively in medical writing and editing, and to participate in the organization of the American Medical Association. He performed an important service to the Academy in rescuing the *Journal* in its floundering early years. After the first volume was published, lack of funds had caused its interruption. Hays had been appointed to set it again on its feet, and his vigorous actions were successful.

Isaac Lea, member of a Philadelphia publishing house in the early part of the century, originally engaged in natural history studies as a recreation. Though an important student of mineralogy, he eventually became one of the most prolific early American writers in con-

chology. The Academy's publications contain over 150 papers by him, largely devoted to the latter.

Samuel George Morton was educated as a physician at the University of Pennsylvania and at the University of Edinburgh, from both of which he received degrees. Of the sixty-two papers he published in Academy serials, many were on geology and paleontology, but his most significant work was in ethnology. His *Crania Americana* (1839) was referred to in the *American Journal of Science and Arts* as "the most important, extensive and valuable contribution to the natural history of man which has yet appeared on the American continent." It received equal acclaim abroad. His magnificent collection of 1,035 human crania eventually came to the Academy.

George Ord was not only a naturalist but a philologist of note. He compiled many data for the first edition of Noah Webster's dictionary, and also contributed to one edition of Johnson's dictionary. He was a loyal friend of Alexander Wilson and vigorously defended him against Audubon's criticisms. He edited a portion of Wilson's *American Ornithology* and wrote the text of volume nine. He had made a fortune in a business partnership with his father, for he was later known to his associates as a wealthy gentleman of leisure. Though of a kindly disposition, he was capable, when aroused, of having a very sharp tongue. He served as president of the Academy from 1851 to 1858, and vice-president of the American Philosophical Society from 1832 to 1835.

Other prominent men who became members before or during 1820 were: Benjamin H. Coates, a Philadelphia doctor; Zaccheus Collins, a man of wide knowledge in the field of botany; Reuben Haines, an active worker in Academy affairs; Dr. Richard Harlan, who wrote extensively in the *Journal* on the subjects of paleontology and herpetology; Augustus E. Jessup, who later established a fund to help train young scientists at the Academy; William H. Keating, a mineralogist; Charles A. Lesueur, who wrote widely on ichthyology, and furnished most of the plates, which lent distinction to the first five volumes of the *Journal*; Titian Peale, both a naturalist and an artist; C. S. Rafinesque, the versatile but erratic naturalist; and Lardner Vanuxem, mineralogist and geologist.

Distinguished correspondents who were elected in this period include William Bartram, Thomas Jefferson, Baron George Cuvier, Pierre André Latreille, Chevalier de Lamarck, F. A. Michaux, Major Stephen H. Long, Thomas Nuttall, and Benjamin Silliman.

The Academy was beginning again to feel the need of expanded quarters. The discussion of this need apparently extended over several years, and through the life of two committees before a new location was secured. In January of 1826 a lot and building were purchased at the southeast corner of Twelfth and George (now Sansom) Streets, for the sum of \$4,300. Subse-



FIG. 6. This building on the southeast corner of Twelfth and George (Sansom) was the first actually owned by the Academy. It was known originally as the "New Jerusalem Church." 1826-1839.

quent alterations brought the total cost to about \$6,000, a good share of which was then, or eventually, paid by Mr. Maclure. The building had been designed for, and used as a place of worship by, a society of Swedenborgians and was commonly known as the "New Jerusalem Church."

This structure was the first home that the Academy actually owned. It was, in a very definite sense, a monument to the devotion of the little group of scientists who had for fifteen years liberally given of their time and efforts. The institution had become an important part of their lives.

The new hall was occupied on May 9, 1826. It was a stuccoed brick building about forty feet square, surmounted by a flat dome. The main entrance on Twelfth Street led into a vestibule with doors to the north and south. These admitted to a single hall with a gallery eight feet wide on all sides. This gallery was midway between the floor and ceiling, light being admitted through the dome and from six side windows above the gallery. The main floor was used for the library and as a meeting room. The collections were arranged in cases on the gallery.

A long narrow room, extending the width of the building on the east, provided accommodation for workers and students. A separate door from this permitted entrance from George Street, and a flight of steps led to the cellar.

In an effort to create a wider interest in the natural sciences, the Academy opened its museum to the public in 1828. Since that time—in the various halls of the Academy—the museum has always been open to visitors. For a time admission could only be secured through tickets which were always to be had from members, but for the most part admittance has been free and unrestricted.

In this new building, the collections and library continued to increase. Throughout the entire time that it

was occupied—until 1839—the Academy experienced a period of prosperity. In 1831 the State Legislature exempted the institution from taxation for twenty years, and in 1840 extended this provision for all time, thus acknowledging its educational usefulness to the public.

The year following the death of Thomas Say in New Harmony, 1835, Mr. Maclure decided to give a large portion of his personal library to the Academy. Dr. Charles Pickering, recently Academy librarian, was commissioned to go to New Harmony and bring this material to the Academy. He encountered many difficulties. Through ice jams on the Ohio River to Pittsburgh, and thence by wagon, the books came to Philadelphia. This substantial gift of 2,259 volumes, with many maps and charts, was a most welcome and valuable addition to the library. Mr. Maclure, during the course of his life, presented a total of 5,232 volumes to the Academy. About a thousand were folios and quartos, rare and costly, and many “possessed by no other institution on this side of the Atlantic.”

During the early years of the institution, many members concerned themselves with expeditions. Some of these were one-man trips, others were formed by small groups, and still others were more elaborately organized expeditions, usually sponsored by the government. William Maclure, Thomas Say, George Ord, and Titian Peale made one of the earliest of these trips to the coast of Georgia and Florida in the winter of 1817 and spring of 1818. The usual purpose of such ventures was the acquisition of materials for the museum.

In 1819 and 1820, three members, A. E. Jessup, Titian Peale, and Thomas Say, accompanied Major Long's Expedition to the Rocky Mountains. Mr. Say wrote a number of papers for the *Journal* on material then collected. But his own notebooks and diary of the expedition were lost when two members of the party took French leave, carrying the books with them on horses stolen from the expedition. The Wilkes U. S. Exploring Expedition, which traversed the globe, carried two Academy members on its staff, Charles Pickering and Titian Peale. Pickering's two-volume manuscript diary relating to this expedition is still preserved in the Academy's library.

There were other government expeditions before 1850 which were accompanied by men who were then or later members of the Institution. Among these were: the Cass Expedition to the Great Lakes (1820); the Long Expedition to the St. Peters River (1823); Schoolcraft's expedition to the Indian Country (1831); Schoolcraft and Allen's Expedition to the source of the Mississippi River (1832); Owen's Exploration of Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois (1839); and Fremont's two expeditions, one between the Missouri River and the Rocky Mountains (1842), and the other to Oregon and California (1843).

The period of prosperity and growth through the twenties and thirties had, among other things, created

again the problem of cramped quarters. Philadelphia itself was rapidly growing, and expanding westward from the Delaware River. In April, 1839, a lot was bought from William Camac, for a new Academy building on the northwest corner of Broad and George Streets, two blocks west of the old quarters.

Mr. Maclure had opposed the purchase of the old property on Twelfth Street. He was a canny Scot and a good business man, as evidenced by the fortune he had amassed, but in this case, his judgment had been at fault. He had felt that the property would not increase in value, urging that the “community system” must prevail in the course of a few years, and Philadelphia would be relatively deserted, and those who might live long enough would “see the foxes looking out at the windows.” Instead, Philadelphia had already engulfed the old site, which had been considered too remote at the time of its purchase, and “in winter scarcely accessible.”

The corner stone for the new building was laid on the twenty-fifth of May, 1839, and the first meeting was held there on February 7, 1840. With their usual zeal for conserving resources, the members did much of the work of moving. Though Maclure, who was still president of the Academy, died within two months after the occupancy of this building, he had contributed \$20,000 toward its erection. The receipts from the sale of the old building and lot, although almost double the purchase price, did not equal the cost of the new lot. Even Maclure's gift, supplemented by liberal donations of members and others interested in science, was not enough to defray costs of the building, and it was occupied under a mortgage.

The new building at Broad and Sansom was a rather plain rectangular structure of brick, which was later covered with plaster. It was two stories in height with an elevation of fifty feet. On the ground it extended forty-five feet on Broad Street and one hundred and fifteen on Sansom, or George. A door on Sansom Street gave access to the library, while another entrance on Broad was used by visitors to the museum, which also included the large east basement room. The meetings of the Academy were held in the west room of the library.

Two additions were made to this building during its occupancy by the Academy. The first in 1847 was donated by Dr. T. B. Wilson, for the housing of his bird collections. It consisted of a thirty-foot extension on the back or west end, extending the height of the building. The second was in 1853, when a twenty-four foot story was added.

In 1841 the Academy commenced the publication of its *Proceedings*, which is today about the only strictly natural history serial in the United States which has passed its 100th volume. It has been an important outlet for scientific research not only for members of the staff, but for other scientists. The government at one



FIG. 7. The Hall on the northwest corner of Broad and Sansom Streets. This was the first building planned and built for the Academy. Two subsequent additions more than doubled its size. 1840-1875.

time used it rather extensively to publish the results of a number of its expeditions.

The first series of the *Journal* had been discontinued in 1842, and Academy members felt that a somewhat more pretentious serial was needed to attract a wider exchange with foreign societies which had publications of that kind. As a result, a second series of the *Journal* was started in 1847. It was issued in quarto form and was a much more elaborate and expensively illustrated serial than any previously published.

Upon the death of William Maclure, William Hembel was elected president, which position he held through 1849. Though he had served as a medical assistant in the Revolution, later studied medicine, and practiced for many years in Philadelphia, he had never received a degree. However, he was widely read in his field and had one of the largest private medical libraries in the city. He was shy and retiring, doubtless owing in part to defective hearing. A benevolent and philanthropic man, he had a wide practice among the poor of the city.

While in the death of Maclure, the Academy had lost its most valued patron, Dr. Thomas B. Wilson, who had become a member in 1832, soon filled this gap, in part, as a financial supporter of the Academy. In 1846 he had purchased the famous collection of birds of the Duc de Rivoli, consisting of 10,000 specimens. In order to provide the needed space for this and other material, he paid for the addition to the new building previously referred to. His entire personal collection of birds—26,000 specimens—was donated in 1860, making, with those already owned by the Academy, “one of the four great collections of birds in the world.” This included also the famous Gould collection of 2,000 Australian birds, previously purchased by Wilson. He had earlier donated \$10,000 to retire the mortgage on the building, and before his death had presented about 11,000 vol-

umes to the library. He bequeathed a \$10,000 fund, the interest to be used for library purposes. He also served a very short term as president.

Of the many important scientists who became associated with the Academy between 1825 and 1850, only brief mention can be made of a few. John Cassin was the leading American ornithologist of his time. Though he worked for a Philadelphia lithographic firm which made many fine illustrations for the Academy publications, his spare time was devoted so closely to the institution that the department of ornithology was one of the most active there.

Dr. Robert Bridges, elected to membership in 1835, and as president in 1864, was perhaps more noted for his service to the Academy in many capacities than as a scientist.

Timothy A. Conrad was one of the Academy's most prolific scientific writers, publishing about seventy-five papers in its serials between 1830 and 1860. These were largely on paleontology and conchology. He was the outstanding American authority on Tertiary geology and paleontology, and left to the Academy many hundreds of type specimens from this geologic age.

Walter R. Johnson, who delivered the address at the laying of the corner stone of the Broad and Sansom building, was an active Academy worker, and published many important papers in the *Proceedings*, a large number dealing with coal. He wrote a large volume for the U. S. Government, particularly for the use of the Navy, on the properties of different kinds of coal and their efficiency in steam engines.

One of the most important figures in Academy history, Dr. Joseph Leidy, was elected to membership in 1845. Dr. E. G. Conklin has called him “the greatest naturalist that America has produced,” and he was certainly one of the most versatile. A distinguished teacher in medicine, he also left an indelible mark as a pioneer in several branches of the natural sciences. Though at this period the great mass of his work was yet to be done, he was to become the first American writer in parasitology and in vertebrate paleontology, and a close student of invertebrate anatomy, geology, mineralogy, and botany. He served as Academy president from 1881 to 1891. After his death, a memorial meeting was held in Philadelphia. It was arranged by fourteen American organizations, and delegates from 136 institutions attended, many from abroad.

William S. Vaux should be mentioned as a man who devoted much time to the financial interests of the Academy, and as a curator for many years, following his election in 1834.

At the end of the period here under discussion—the mid-century mark—about 420 gentlemen and one lady (Mrs. Thomas Say) had been elected as resident members of the Society. In the same period, about 675 had been received as correspondents, among them many of the most distinguished of foreign scientists. During

these thirty-eight years Philadelphia had more than quadrupled in size, having reached the 400,000 mark.

Great gains had been made in scientific knowledge, and general education had advanced. But the public had not yet embraced the Academy as worthy of its general support. It is remarkable that the small group of members should have accomplished so much. They had at this time no acknowledgments to make to any branch of government for patronage, though at later periods the State of Pennsylvania did appropriate funds for building purposes.

The library of the Academy contained about 13,000 volumes, and the museum nearly 150,000 specimens of natural history. The departments of birds, shells, plants, and fossils made up over 120,000 of the latter. In many departments, the collections are said to have been superior to any in the United States or Europe.

It will have been noted that the names of medical men have often appeared in this sketch. Their contributions to the early activities of the Academy should be recognized. In the "List of Members" of 1836, over 30 per cent of the members and 32 per cent of correspondents were doctors. This may seem an odd circumstance, but it undoubtedly reflects the fact that relatively little academic training in natural science was available outside medical schools. Doctors were among the few who had learned the necessary techniques of the scientific method.

It should be mentioned that there was considerable interlocking of Academy membership with that of other Philadelphia institutions. Among these were the Franklin Institute, American Philosophical Society, University of Pennsylvania, Wagner Free Institute of Sciences, and the Wistar Institute of Anatomy and Biology.

Much progress had been made in the first thirty-eight years, but the next half century was to see a development far beyond the dreams of the original members, though they had done their work well. Dr. Amos Binney, a Bostonian with the traditional pride of his own

city, dedicated a three-volume monograph in these words: "To the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, to whose founders is due the first effective impulse given to the study of natural science of North America, and whose labors have been mainly instrumental in developing the natural history of this country."

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THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE OF THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA

HENRY BUTLER ALLEN

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LET us travel backward in our minds to December 1823. James Monroe was President of the United States. The last census had shown that the city of Philadelphia had a population of about sixty-four thousand, while that of the entire county of Philadelphia was one hundred thirty-seven thousand. The industrial revolution was under way. Machinery was taking the place of hand labor, but few of the social adjustments necessary to that change had started. Industry was quickening, although executives and mechanics alike had little technical training and frequently little education. There was no high school in Philadelphia. The crying need of the time was for education, particularly in the crafts and sciences.

One of those feeling this need was a young man twenty-two years of age, Samuel Vaughan Merrick. Born in Maine, he came to Philadelphia in 1816 at the age of fifteen and went to work in the counting house of his uncle, Samuel Vaughan. His uncle gave him the opportunity of entering a small manufacturing business. Eager to acquit himself with credit, young Merrick determined to secure the proper training. To his distress he discovered that there was no school or institution in which mechanical training could be obtained by the public. Training could be obtained only by becoming indentured to someone already established in business. Being young and unafraid, he determined to correct this deficiency.

I called a meeting at the Philosophical Hall of some fifteen or twenty gentlemen who I supposed would take an interest in so useful a movement. The night of the meeting came, and no one responded to the call. After talking the matter over the next day with several who professed an interest in the project, I called a second meeting with a similar result.

Undismayed, Merrick then allied himself with William H. Keating, a young professor of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania. Together they obtained the interest and support of about a dozen citizens, mostly young men and only a few of them well-to-do. A meeting of this group was held on December 9, 1823, in the hall of the American Philosophical Society. It was decided at that meeting to form a society for the promotion of the mechanic arts. A committee was appointed to prepare a constitution. Another group selected from a Directory twelve to fifteen hundred names of persons whose occupations indicated that they would be likely to favor the movement. It is evident that there were no social barriers as the persons selected to be notified of the next meeting were drawn from all trades and activities and included artisans as well as manufacturers.

When the meeting for organization was held on the

evening of February 5, 1824, the old County Court House at Sixth and Chestnut Streets was filled to overflowing. The purposes of the projected society were explained and unanimously approved. It was resolved that the best mode of obtaining the desired objects would be by the establishment of popular lectures, by the formation of a cabinet of models and minerals, and a library, and by offering premiums on all useful improvements in the mechanic arts. Then the proposed constitution was presented; its provisions discussed, amended,

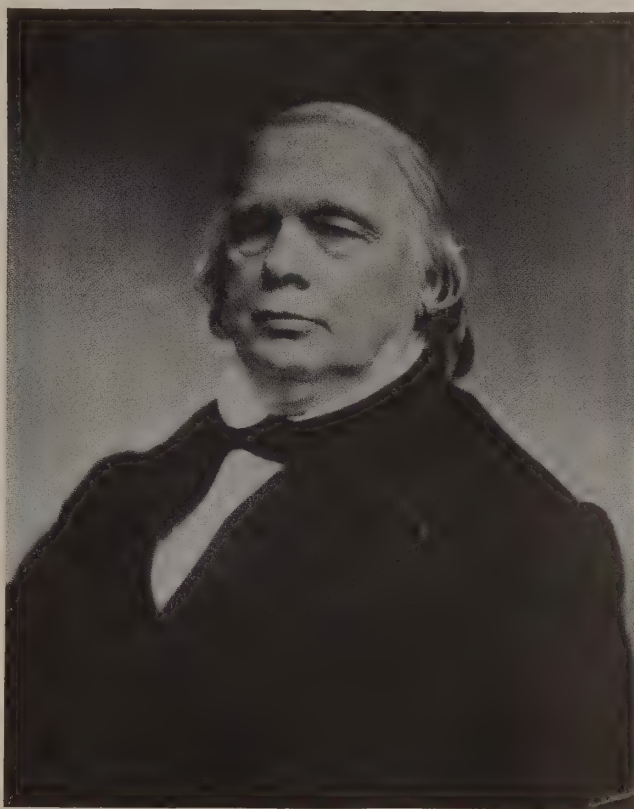


FIG. 1. Samuel Vaughan Merrick (1801-1870).

and finally adopted; and a day for the election of officers was set. Between four and five hundred persons enrolled as members; and on March 30, 1824, The Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts received its charter from the State Legislature.

Membership in the Institute was freely open to all interested persons, regardless of station, as the varied occupations of the members testify. The first twenty-one names in the first alphabetical list of members showed fourteen occupations in the following order:

Fire-Engine Maker (that was Merrick), Merchant, Brewer, Teacher, Saddler, Plasterer, Plumber, Marble Mason, Clothier, Powder Manufacturer, Shot Manufacturer, Druggist, Counsellor, and Blacksmith. The amazing manner in which The Franklin Institute took a position of leadership during the years of its infancy can best be explained by its readiness to be of service to the entire community. Not only did it serve the public by its own activities, but it stood ready to lend its aid to many projects originating with others.

The records which remain do not reveal any definite statement as to why The Franklin Institute should have been named in honor of Benjamin Franklin. However,



FIG. 2. William Hypolitus Keating (1799-1840).

not only are the activities of the Institute devoted to the fields of science in which Franklin was interested, but the purpose of the Institute—the education of young people in technology and the dissemination of knowledge among the mass of people—was dear to Franklin as is shown by his Will. It may be surmised that, if the founders selected any single characteristic of Benjamin Franklin's personality for honor, it was his usefulness. That quality has been consistently preserved throughout the history of the Institute.

No time was lost in launching the various activities of the new society, and within a brief time The Franklin Institute had established its value to the community.

It is interesting to see what happened to the two

young leaders in the organization of the Institute. Merrick was able to study engineering; and in 1836, with John H. Thorn, he established the Southwark Iron Foundry. He became a member of City Council and went abroad to study European methods of gas manufacture and distribution for street lighting. He was the chief engineer in the construction of the Philadelphia Gas Works, which was completed in 1837. In 1847 he became the first President of the Pennsylvania Railroad. He was President of The Franklin Institute from 1852 to 1855.

Keating became Professor of Chemistry in the Institute's schools and a member of the American Philosophical Society, serving for a time as its Secretary. He studied law and was admitted to the Bar in 1834. Before his death as a comparatively young man, he was one of the founders of the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad.

Among the original small group active in the organization of the Institute were others who distinguished themselves as able and useful citizens. One was Matthias W. Baldwin, founder of the Baldwin Locomotive Works, who earlier had made tools for calico printers and for bookbinders. Another was Colonel Peter A. Browne, an attorney who delivered the address at the laying of the cornerstone of the Institute and who was active in the introduction of gas into Philadelphia. James Ronaldson, the first President of the Institute, a leader in the cotton textile industry, a type founder and philanthropist, was a third.

Other names not mentioned elsewhere in this article that appear as officers, members of the Board or on important committees in the first few years are Alexander Dallas Bache, Clement C. Biddle, Moses Brown, Mathew Carey, Thomas Fletcher, George Fox, Frederick Fraley, John F. Frazer, Thomas Gilpin, Dr. Robert E. Griffith, Frederick Graaf, Reuben Haines, John Harrison, Thomas Loud, Thomas McEuen, Lloyd Mifflin, Sheldon Potter, Adam Ramage, James Rush, Thomas Scattergood, and Samuel R. Wood.

All of the above were active and influential members of the community; and enough of the names will be familiar to anyone interested in the early development of Philadelphia industry to give a conception of the position that the Institute immediately took in the minds of leading citizens.

SCHOOLS AND LECTURES

Dr. William H. Keating was named Professor of Mineralogy and Chemistry and delivered his first lecture in April 1824 in the old Academy building on Fourth Street near Arch, owned by the University of Pennsylvania [C, II]. This was the beginning of lectures on pure and applied science which are still being delivered before the Institute.

In October of the same year, Robert M. Patterson (later superintendent of the United States Mint) was

appointed Professor of Natural Philosophy and Mechanics. At the same time a school of architectural and mechanical drawing was opened for members' sons and apprentices. Less than two years later a high school was organized. Known as The Franklin High School, it provided a greatly needed opportunity for education. Within a short time, classes were held in the evening as well as the day. The curriculum included such subjects as geography, history, Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, and German as well as the theoretical and practical sciences. The records show that over three hundred scholars were enrolled in 1827. Under the capable guidance of Walter Rogers Johnson the school attained immediate success.

It was the model upon which was patterned the Central High School, later established by the city as part of the public school system. As the more liberal studies were thus provided for, the Institute was enabled to confine itself more strictly to scientific activities. Many courses were dropped, but the School of Mechanical Drawing continued under its auspices for ninety-nine years.

The lectures have been continued since the foundation. At first they were of a character calculated to be particularly useful to the students. Soon they became reports on the progress of science and technology in this and other countries. For many years these reports have, for the most part, been presented by those actually responsible for the progress or closely affiliated with it. In this manner the Institute members are kept in touch with the latest advances in the useful arts and the sciences bearing thereon. A record of these lectures constitutes a survey of the development and advances made in science during the century of amazing progress in which the Institute has made its history.

THE JOURNAL

As scientific publications were expensive and hard to obtain, it was felt that the publication of a journal would be useful to industry, to members, and to students in the school of the Institute, as well as to students and apprentices of other cities who were unable to take advantage of the educational facilities provided by the Institute. The prospectus, issued August 1, 1825, announced the fact that

shortly will be published—

THE FRANKLIN JOURNAL AND MECHANICS MAGAZINE

The Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania, for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts, Edited by Dr. Thomas P. Jones, Professor of Mechanics in the Institute.

The object of *The Franklin Journal*, as defined in the prospectus, was "to diffuse information on every subject connected with the useful arts." Many of the early articles were translations or abstracts of significant articles

published elsewhere. The *Journal* soon gained a character of its own; and the publication of original work became its principal feature; but the critical consideration of other work has always been a part of its policy. Starting in 1828 the title was changed to *The Journal of The Franklin Institute*, and it has been published under that name to the present time.

Dr. Jones was especially interested in patents, and the *Journal* published an abstract of the specifications and the claims in full. Prior to 1843 the publication of the claims was omitted from the official Patent Office publications, thus making the *Journal* the only source at present available for reference to the specifications and claims of patents issued by the United States from 1828 to 1842 inclusive. Dr. Jones became Superintendent of the Patent Office but did not relinquish his connection with the *Journal* until his death in 1848.

LIBRARY

The plan of the founders for the "formation of a library of books relating to science and the useful arts and the opening of a reading room" received attention in 1827 when the first Committee on Library was appointed. At first the books were stored in the residence of a member of the committee, but in 1828 the reading room was opened.

The growth of the Library was stimulated by the publication of the *Journal* for the subject matter of the *Journal* was of such importance that exchange relations were easily established with other societies and with leading magazines and periodicals devoted to science and the useful arts. These exchanges formed the nucleus of the new Library and are still an important factor in the annual increase of the Library.

COMMITTEE ON INVENTIONS

A problem that was, apparently, uppermost in the minds of the founders, was the need felt by inventors and discoverers for some competent, trustworthy and impartial body on whom they could confidently rely for an opinion as to the usefulness of their inventions and discoveries.

One of the first acts of the Board of Managers of the new society was to appoint a Board of Examiners, whose duty it was to examine and report on all new and useful machines, inventions, and discoveries submitted to them. This group has been in continual existence since its appointment in 1824 although its title has been changed. For a brief time it was called the Committee on Inventions, and since 1834 it has been known as the Committee on Science and the Arts.

In the earliest years the group gave wise counsel to inventors, pointed out what had previously been accomplished, saved them loss by showing them when their inventions were not new; and when any matter of real novelty or value was presented, endorsed it with their approval and aided in securing public recognition and reward. The scope of the Committee's activity has

been expanded from time to time; and during the last eighty years, it has been devoted to an increasing degree to the selection of the winners of the various medals and honors in the custody of the Institute.

During the period from June 1825 to December 1833, one hundred and one cases for investigation were considered. These covered a wide range of subjects and were the beginning of many devices that have been developed further to meet present day requirements, as well as many that applied to activities no longer of importance in our industrial life.

EXHIBITIONS

The first quarterly report of the Board of Managers to the members of the newly-formed Institute was presented at a meeting on April 5, 1824. In this report, the importance of public exhibitions, to which all the products of national industry might be sent, was described as follows:

It is confidently believed that when the products of our industry are collected from the various workshops now dispersed through the city and state, and exhibited together, they will form a collection calculated to excite a gratifying sense of pride . . . and an encouraging hope that under proper regulations, we may soon compete with foreigners in the manufacture of all useful articles.

Thus in October of that year, the first exhibition of the products of American industry was held in Carpenter's Hall under the auspices of the Institute.

Little time was available between April and October for extensive planning and preparation, but committees were formed to pass upon the products of the different classes of industry. Robert Hare, John Harrison, and John P. Wetherill composed the committee on chemicals; and Thomas Sully, William Strickland, and Rembrandt Peale served as the committee on fine arts. Sully also served on the committee on paints and colors. Fifteen other committees were formed; and their comments contained in the official reports on the various exhibits throw an interesting light on the state of industry at the time.

Awards of silver or bronze medals or of honorable mention were made for blister steel, bar iron, japanned goods, broadcloths, satinettes, cabinet ware, straw and grass bonnets, domestic carpeting, and so forth. A bronze medal was awarded "to George Catlin, for a bassoon exhibited by him which had many improvements not before introduced in this instrument and the tone and finish of which are excellent." Particular notice was made of busts of General Lafayette by William Rush and by Luigi Persico. A silver medal was awarded to Joseph Saxton for a Clock: "Its 'scapement is upon an entirely new principle and it has a new kind of compensating pendulum." Many specimens of cotton and linen goods were shown from sources as far away as Rhode Island and Maine. Two pairs of stockings were "made of cotton grown on Bartram's Garden." Woollen goods were entered from Massachu-



FIG. 3. The Franklin Institute, 15 South Seventh Street, Philadelphia.

setts, Maryland, and Ohio; and several examples by V. & C. Dupont & Co. of Wilmington. Among the books, Carey and Lea showed a Bible, Barton's *Flora*, and Lavoisne's *American Atlas*. Wilson's *Ornithology* was entered by Samuel F. Bradford. Agricultural implements were represented by a self-sharpening plough by C. and O. Evans "capable of being converted into a never-dulling plough, by substituting a share of a new construction." Another exhibit was "machine paper of J. and T. Gilpin twelve feet long, capable of being made any length, of good materials and well made. . . ."

Much was learned from the first exhibition, and those held in subsequent years evoked keen competition for honors among American manufacturers. The awards and comments of the judges are too lengthy for even brief mention, but they are available in the Library of the Institute for those interested.

These displays were continued by the Institute annually or biennially until 1858, and at irregular intervals thereafter. By that time industry had developed to such an extent that specialized exhibitions managed by industrial groups became the custom. The influence of the Institute on this development was considerable, and the enthusiasm of the original Board for these exhibitions has been amply justified.

HEADQUARTERS

As has been mentioned, the first course of lectures was delivered in the Academy Building on Fourth Street. Soon the Institute rented the lower story of the old Carpenters' Hall on Chestnut Street, where the first exhibition had been held. As the usefulness of the Institute became rapidly evident, it was shortly decided to erect a building; and a lot on the east side of Seventh Street between Market and Chestnut Streets was purchased [A, III].

The cornerstone was laid on June 3, 1825, with appropriate ceremonies; and the work carried out according to plans and estimates furnished by John Haviland, architect and member of the Board. This was the home of the Institute until its removal to the present site. The last meeting held in the old lecture hall took place on November 23, 1933.

The second story of the building was arranged so that it might be occupied as a courtroom and offices for the Circuit and District Courts. A lease was entered into with the United States for a term of ten years; but after a short occupancy, the lease was cancelled. The reason for the cancellation is amusing and reflects the size of the city—it was found inconvenient for members of the bar to be so far from the County Court House at Sixth and Chestnut!

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

On many occasions the Institute has undertaken intensive studies of problems that were a matter of concern at the time. These investigations were initiated either by the Institute itself or at the request of the local, state or federal government.

The first investigation of this kind was on the subject of water as a source of power. Almost every type of water motor known at the time was investigated; some seven hundred experiments were performed on various types of water wheels; and the results, which were published in the *Journal*, were of great value to engineers. The expenses of these experiments were met by friends of the Institute who wished to further the progress of industry.

In the following year, 1830, the Institute formed a committee for the study of steam boiler explosions which were then occurring with alarming frequency, especially on steamboats. The government of the United States soon became interested in these experiments; and with the aid of an appropriation from Congress, investigations were continued into the strength of material used in the construction of boilers. This is said to be the first Governmentally-supported research in our country. This Congressional appropriation defrayed the actual cost of the experiments, but no part of the money so appropriated was used as compensation for the experimenters. These were all volunteers who devoted months of time to the investigation and discovered valuable facts which have since been utilized for the benefit

and safety of the public. The results of these investigations were also published in the *Journal*, forming a contribution of the utmost value to manufacturers, architects, and builders. They were widely quoted abroad and for many years were regarded as the most authoritative sources of information on the subjects to which they related.

An account of The Franklin Institute during the first five or six years of its existence reveals a rather astonishing record. It is infrequent that a new organization is able to establish itself so rapidly as one of the most useful and most active groups in the community. Credit for this is due not only to the founders who saw the need and sought to meet it, but to the manufacturers and other public-spirited citizens who gave to the young society their wholehearted support and encouragement. It is a comforting characteristic of American life that organizations devoted to public education and the encouragement of industry can rely upon the continued interest and support of private citizens.

The Franklin Institute continued its career of active service fulfilling the promise of its early youth. It is natural that the first few years in the life of a society should contain more than their proportionate share of new services and innovations. This is perhaps less true of The Franklin Institute than of others, for the Institute throughout its existence has shown a willingness not only to pioneer, but to relinquish any activity that appeared to have outlived its usefulness or that was adequately provided for elsewhere.

A CENTURY OF SERVICE

Following the auspicious beginning of The Franklin Institute and the intense activity of the first few years, came a long period of service and development. Monthly weather reports were published in the *Journal* starting in January 1831 and continued through 1843. Three years later, in cooperation with the American Philosophical Society, observations were made in every county of the state. A study of paving highways was undertaken at the request of the city in 1843. In 1850 the Institute established a School of Design for Women. The Association of American Geologists was instituted, later changing its name to The American Association for the Advancement of Science. These few activities are mentioned only to indicate the diversity of activities undertaken during the mid-years. Today the Institute, continuing all its original objectives, has grown into its present home on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway, and has over six thousand members. Its "cabinet of models" is now a science museum with four hundred operating exhibits. Its research now keeps three hundred scientists and engineers busy. Its Library, *Journal*, Lectures, and Medal Awards all stem from the far-sightedness of the few at Seventh Street between Market and Chestnut more than a century and a quarter ago who wanted to do something useful.

HOUSES AND EARLY LIFE IN PHILADELPHIA

GRANT MILES SIMON

WILLIAM Penn conceived and planned a community, where all men might live simply and in peace.¹ The town that grew on his foundation, and became the cross-roads of colonial America, might well have disturbed him. While his life was somewhat of a paradox—he had been raised in surroundings of ease and some affluence, where more consideration was given to the usages of sophistication than to the practice of the common virtues—he retained, even after devoting his life to the teaching and promulgation of a faith, demanding rigid simplicity and self discipline, the forms at least of the environment of his youth. His dress, his domestic life, his state barge, and his coach were hardly reflected in the simple manners of his prosylites, at least not in the first few decades of the city's existence.² But by 1750

¹ Penn, William, *Recueil de Diverses pieces concernant la Pensylvanie*, 3; "Brief recit de la Province de Pensylvanie, Nouvellement accordé par le Roy, Sous le Grande seau d'Angleterre, aux Sieur Guillaume Penn, auquel il a cedé son droit. Ayant obtenu par la providence de Dieu de la faveur du Roy, un Pays dans L'Amerique, j'ay crû être obligé pour mon intérêt, d'en donner connoissance au Public, afin que tant ceux de mon Pays, que des autres nations, qui desireront se transporter eux et leur Familles au dela des Mers, puissent rencontrer un Pays digne de leur choix: Et que, s'il arrive que le Pays, les conditions & le Gouvernement leur plaisent; (autant qu'il est possible de penetrer dans la qualité d'un Pays qui n'est pas encore cultivé), ils puissent, s'ils le trouve bon, s'établir avec moy dans la Province apres decrite. Premièrement le titre & le droit du Roy en ce Pays la, avant qu'il me l'ait cedé, est le droit des Nations; parceque toute terre inculte, qui est decouverte par quelque Prince, luy appartient de droit, pour la depance qu'il a fait pour la decouvrir; Et que cette Province est une partie de celles de l'Amerique que les Predecesseurs du Roy d'Angleterre ont decouvertes & se sont acquis, et qu'ils ont, de même que luy, pris grand soin de cultiver & de conserver.

Le titre du Sieur Guillaume Penn, de la Part du Roy, se voit en la Patente que sa Majesté luy a accordée le 4, Mars 1681, dont l'Etrait suit—"

20 Articles ending "En temoins de quoy nous avons fait expedier nos lettres patente,

a Westminster, etc.

a la Haye, chey Abraham Troyel, Marchand Libraire, dans la Grande Sale de la Cour, MDCLXXXIV. (Six known copies extant.)

Pennypacker, Samuel Whitaker, *The settlement of Germantown, Pennsylvania and the beginning of German emigration to North America*, 116, "On the 22nd, of August, 1677, William Penn left Frankfort on his way to Kriegsheim. The magistrate of the village, upon the instigation of the clergyman, attempted to prevent him from preaching, but with the friends there and a 'coachful from Worms,' he had a quiet and comfortable meeting. From there he walked to Mannheim, in an effort to see the Prince concerning the oppressions of the Quakers, which had been renewed. Failing to find him, he wrote to him a vigorous letter upon the subject. On the 26th, Penn walked out from Worms, six English miles, and held a meeting, lasting five hours, in the course of which 'The Lord's power was sweetly opened to many of the inhabitants.'"

² *Ibid.*, 100, Letter from Joris Wertmuller, dated March 16,

the aspect of the town bore a closer resemblance to London than to Penn's vision of a disciplined community. Ironically, the customs of the people at large began to follow the pattern of life that Penn knew so well and sought to change.

The houses of the more prosperous were filled with furniture and costly services imported from England and the Continent, with luxurious appointments dictated by the fashionable taste abroad. They bore little resemblance to the one roomed houses which the first immigrants were happy to have after winters spent in the caves and huts along the river bank, and not much more to the plain houses of the men and women who had labored with their hands to make the "Holy Experi-

1684, to Benedict Kunts, "The City of Philadelphia covers a great stretch of country, and is growing larger and larger. The houses in the country are better built than those within the city. The land is very productive, and raises all kinds of fruits. All kinds of corn are sown. From a bushel of wheat, it is said, you may get sixty or seventy, so good is the land. You can keep as many cattle as you wish, and there is provender enough for them and as many swine as you want, since there are multitudes of oak trees, which produce an abundance of acorns to make them fat, and other wild nuts. You find here householders who have a hundred cows and innumerable hogs, so that a man can have as much pork as he wants. There are all kinds of wild animals, such as deer, roes, etc; all kinds of birds, some tame and others wild, by the thousand, together with an exceptionally great quantity of fish. The land lies in a good climate and is very healthy. You seldom see mists or fogs. There are many great and small rivers that are navigable, beautiful springs, fountains, mountains and valleys. The farmers or husbandmen live better than lords. If a workman will only work four or five days in a week, he can live grandly. The farmers here pay no tithes nor contributions. Whatever they have is free for them alone. They eat the best and sell the worst. Handicraftsmen earn here much money, together with their board and drink, which are very good. The natives or Indians are blackish like the heathen, who through Germany and Holland have disappeared. If anyone is inclined to come here, let him look for a good ship-master, since he cannot believe everything that they say. The freight from England to Pensilvania is five pound sterling, about fifty-six Holland guildens, but I should advise you rather to go with a Holland shipmaster to Manhates, formerly called New Amsterdam. and now New York, two or three days' journey from Pensilvania, and I should advise you to take with you what you need upon the ship, especially brandy, oranges, lemons, spices and sugar since the tea may be very trying. See that you are well supplied with clothes and linen, and it will be better than to have money, since what I bought in Holland for ten guildens, I here sold again for thirty guildens; but you must not buy too dear.—

"Brother-in-law B. K., if you come into these regions bring a woman with you, and if you bring two for me, Joris Wertmuller, I shall be glad, because then we shall live like lords.—I, Joris Wertmuller, Switzer by birth, at present in Pensilvania." William J. Campbell, Philadelphia, 1899.

Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* 1: 98, Phila., L. H. Everts, 1884: "He also had a gig, a state coach and four, and a barge, manned by a coxswain and six oarsmen, and carrying sail besides."



FIG. 1. Philadelphia in the year 1702. F. J. Wade, lith. [1875]. Courtesy of Atwater Kent Museum.

ment" a reality. These houses are the mansions usually described as the historic houses of Philadelphia, the others, of which so many remain, are no less historic (include the existing buildings of the nineteenth century—see Map key).

In his pilgrimages through western Europe, Penn preached his religious philosophy, and made converts to his faith and his new "frame of government." The people he visited had been persecuted for well over one hundred years for their temerity in rejecting the established church and, in some instances, the incumbent authority. In Holland, towards the end of the sixteenth century, hundreds of men and women were put to death for these causes. It was usual to burn the men and drown the women. Occasionally some were buried alive, and the rack and like preliminary tortures were used to extort confessions, and get information concerning others of the sect. Ydse Gawkes, in a letter quoted by Pennypacker, and written to his brother in prison, gives a graphic description of his own treatment. After telling that his hands were tied behind his back, he continues:

Then they drew me up about a foot from the ground and let me hang. I was in great pain, but I tried to be quiet. Nevertheless, I cried out three times and was then silent. They said that this is only child's play, and letting me down again they put me on a stool, but asked me no questions, and said nothing to me. They fastened an iron bar to my feet with two chains, and hung on the bar three heavy weights. When they drew me up again, a Spaniard tried to hit me in the face with a chain, but he could not reach; while I was hanging I struggled hard, and got one foot through the chain, but then all the weight was on one leg. They tried to fasten it again, but I fought with all my strength. That made them all laugh, but I was in great pain.

He was afterward burned to death by a slow fire at Deventer, in May, 1571. They met in secret places and avoided knowing the names of the brethren, so that, even under torture, they could not divulge any information. These were Mennonites, from whose teachings the great Baptist churches of England sprang, and which in turn inspired George Fox, the founder of the Quakers.³

³ Pennypacker, Samuel Whitaker, *The settlement of Germantown, Pennsylvania and the beginning of German emigration to North America*, 16 et seq. Phila., William J. Campbell, 1899.

To the descendants of such people, and to those in England, France, and Germany, who were ostracized and proscribed for their convictions, Penn's invitation to settle in Pennsylvania must have seemed inspired.⁴ The terms under which the emigrants might embark for this promised land were no less inviting than the offer of spiritual freedom. His conception of the necessary rules for the government of the community was liberal and unprecedented. To those with sufficient funds to purchase one thousand acres of ground, he offered a bonus of town lots and other considerations; to those without funds, he offered free transportation to be paid for by indenture as a servant for three years and at the expiration of the indenture, a grant of fifty acres of ground and ample time in which to meet their obligations. He advised them in considerable detail concerning the bounties of the new country and the equipment necessary for the voyage, and desirable in beginning life anew.

This colony was not to be, in the modern sense either a town or city, but an agricultural community, where each family would occupy enough ground to be self-sustaining; at least this was his original plan.⁵ It was greatly modified even before Penn sailed, and the plan of 1682 [Holmes Map, upper corner], as laid out by his surveyor, Captain Thomas Holmes, provided for the development of a town, incidentally, the first town plan in the colonies. The checkerboard of streets allowed only two to three acres between the street lines, and these areas were in turn sub-divided into town lots of varying sizes.

The "Holy Experiment" thus made its first concession to practical exigencies, but not its last. Within one hundred years, the colony dominated originally by principles of religious freedom and conceived as a small community became the second city in the Kingdom, exceeding in population and trade the more ancient city of Dublin. The Quakers did retain spiritual and temporal control until about 1747, when the serious problem of defence against the expected invasion by the French and Indians divided the people, indeed the families themselves. The establishment of the Association Battery in that year is accepted by some as marking the end of complete control of the town by the Quakers.

The historic houses of Philadelphia might properly be placed in four principal sub-divisions conforming to the periods of development of the city: first, the shelters of the first emigrants; second, the early and substantial houses supplanting these huts and caves; third, the stone and brick houses in general use by the artisans and small merchants; and, lastly, the more pretentious mansions of the families who had attained some degree of economic security. There are no known remains of the first group. Many of the emigrants lived for a time at

least in caves dug in the bank between what is now Water Street and Front Street. The site of the cave reported to have been the abode of Pastorius is known and marked at Front Street below South; the progenitors of the Morris family lived in another cave near Front and Market. The condition of these and similar caves became so bad that in a few years they were condemned by the city fathers, and their further use prohibited.

There are few documented examples of the second group, particularly in the older part of the city. These houses were small, materials were scarce and time was pressing; there was much to do of greater importance than providing for the amenities that larger and more comfortable houses would demand. Probably because of their number many houses of the third group are extant, even in the immediate neighborhood of Independence Hall. A good deal is known and recorded concerning the fourth group, the "mansions," modelled after and comparing favorably with the great houses of London.

It is, of course, true, that here lived the important families, the partisan leaders in the struggle for independence. They were the descendants of the immigrants who had prospered materially, if at some loss to their spiritual integrity; whose sons had been educated in the colleges of the old world. These men, together with similar groups from the other colonies and with men whose wisdom derived from life, formed that inspired assembly which could and did conceive the great instruments that bound to a common purpose the widely divergent interests of the thirteen colonies.

But for each of these "historic mansions," there exist today hundreds of houses equally old or older, occupied during some part of the eighteenth century or the early part of the nineteenth century by those of lesser gentility and prominence. Research has yet to determine the original occupants of many of these houses and to trace the genealogy of their descendants. Just as an army depends not only on its generals but more largely on the stomachs of its privates, so an historic era is marked by the houses of the common people as well as by those of the gentry.

In 1777, Philadelphia, or that part of the city served by more or less paved streets, extended from the Delaware River to about what is now Seventh Street, and from Vine Street on the north to Lombard Street on the south, and included a fringe of buildings bordering the river extending back roughly to Front Street from Wiccaco north to Callowhill and the beginning of the Great Road to the West.⁶ The city had a population estimated at about 35,000, distributed in perhaps 7,000 houses. It covered less than a square mile of ground.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁵ Penn, William, *Recueil de Diverses pieces* etc. Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia*, 85.

⁶ Pa. Hist. Soc., Maps, A Plan of the City and Environs of Philadelphia with the Works and Encampments of His Majesty's Forces, Under the Command of Lieutenant-General Sir William Howe, K. B. 1777.

While an actual survey of these houses is yet to be made, a conservative estimate of those extant would be close to one thousand. Many of these are only one and one-half stories in height, which would indicate that they were either part of the early period or else built toward the latter part of the eighteenth century as workmen's houses. A house of this general type exists at 421 Locust Street built by "Rogers, a laborer in 1800" [C, V]. From Lombard Street southward, between the river and Front Street and in the smaller streets, north of Market near the river, are clusters of these ancient homes, Elfreth's Alley running from Front to Second just north of Christ's Church [E, II] is an example.

After stopping at the Swedish settlement at Upland, now Chester, Penn disembarked on a sandy beach near the "Blue Anchor Tavern." He was not establishing a colony in an unknown wilderness. For over fifty years the Dutch and Swedes had maintained a settlement here; there were some forty families in the immediate vicinity. Thomas Paskel, in a letter to J. J. Chippenham in England, dated February 10, 1683, says:

There are here Swedes and Finns, who have inhabited this place for forty years and lead an easy life because of the abundance of the commodities; but their life was wild before the coming of the English, before whom they now show themselves very proudly. They are an industrious people. In the construction of their houses they use little or no iron. They will build you a house, without any other instrument than a hatchet. With this one tool they will cut down a tree, cut it into pieces in less time than two other men could do it with a saw; with this instrument and a few wedges of wood they make planks or whatever you wish and with great skill. They speak usually English, Finnish, Swedish or Dutch. They plant a little tobacco and Indian corn, their women are good housekeepers, they spin the linen and cloth from which they make their garments.

So Philadelphia never had the characteristics of a frontier town.⁷ The emigrants brought with them some at least of the utensils essential to comfort, here they found men willing and able to build their homes. They were, of course, small. The "Blue Anchor," where Penn stopped near the beach [G, V], according to Watson, who states that he was present when it was demolished, "to build greater," extended about twelve feet on Front Street and about twenty-two feet on Dock, having a ceiling of about eight and one-half feet. It was

the southern most of ten houses of like dimensions, begun about the same time and called "Budd's Long Row." They had to the eye the appearance of brick houses, although they were actually framed with wood, and filled in with small bricks, bearing the impression of having been imported.

This would be in accord with English traditional house architecture of the period, what we now term loosely "Half-timber construction." The size of such a building was apparently convenient and in common use. The remains of similar houses surrounded by later additions may still be found on Germantown Avenue.

⁷ Bridenbaugh, Carl, *Cities in the wilderness*, 131, N. Y., Ronald Press, 1938.



FIG. 2. Department of the United States for Foreign Affairs, South Sixth Street [A, III, opposite No. 37]. Water color illustrating the size of the "early" buildings: "12 feet in front by 30 feet in depth." Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

The house consisted usually of one room with one long wall principally used for the fireplace, at or near the corner; to one side was a narrow and winding stair to the floor above. A cellar "fit to live in" was an integral part of the house. The roof was customarily gabled, with small windows in one or both gables. When dormer windows were used they were constructed with a flat roof. The roof was covered with slabs of wood, shingles, or tile. While wood shingles were more commonly used in the city, tiles were used largely by the Germans. Roofs covered with these tiles were still to be seen around Pennsburg a few years ago. The tiles were about six inches wide by some fifteen inches long, laid edge to edge and with only a head lap. They were laid over lath without nails or pegs. The exposed surface of the tile was grooved to facilitate the flow of water away from the abutting edge.

The common wall material in the city was brick.⁸ At Penn's suggestion, James Logan encouraged the construction of brick kilns, and this material was used extensively. The legend that the early houses were generally built of brick imported from England cannot be sustained in fact.

There are legends of flat-roofed houses along the water front above Market Street [G, II]. It is entirely a matter of conjecture as to what constituted a "flat roof." It may have meant what is more commonly known as a "lean to" or shed, the simplest way in which to roof a small building, or it may be that these early carpenters were ship's carpenters and that they attempted to cover these buildings with a deck, just as they would have "roofed" a ship. No houses of this type are known to exist today, but they may be part of later buildings constructed above and around them.

⁸ Benson, Adolph B., *Peter Kalm's travels in North America, The English Version of 1770* 1: 99-100., N. Y., Wilson-Erickson, 1937.



FIG. 3. Graff House 1883. Drawing by Joseph Pennell.

These were the early houses, they were followed by more ambitious constructions, not infrequently additions to the older houses. The new additions, or those entirely new, were more often two and one-half to three and one-half stories high. Richard Wistar in 1795 built what is believed to be the first four-story building in the city. It still stands at the northwest corner of Third and Market, much emasculated by the passage of many occupancies and the ravages of time.

A little farther west on Market Street at the southwest corner of Seventh, there existed until its demolition in 1883 what was originally a three and a half story house (fig. 3) built by Jacob Graff, Jr., for his home [A, III]. It would have been no more celebrated than hundreds of similar houses had it not been for a trivial incident in its history. The second floor "consisting of a parlor and bedroom" was rented in 1776 to a young visitor from Virginia. And so this plain house⁹ became famous as the Philadelphia residence of Thomas Jefferson. Here he made the drafts of the resolution, reviewed by Franklin, Lee, and Adams, read by Colonel John Nixon from the platform of Rittenhouse's observatory on the eighth of July, 1776, and marking the severance of all material ties between the colonies and the mother country.

And so with many other houses in the old part of the city (See Map Index). There are ample, documented records of the dramatic events which transpired in these dwellings, but the buildings have been demolished "to build greater." Generations yet to come will weigh the evidence. However, there still remain on the fringe of the old city many hundreds of houses of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries of whose history little or nothing is known. They were occupied by artisans and merchants whose contribution to the new country

⁹ Letter from Thomas Jefferson to Dr. James Mease, dated Sept. 16, 1825.

whether great or small have not been recorded. They are none the less an integral part of the historic background of Philadelphia.

These buildings were sufficiently imposing to suggest to visitors to the city a favorable comparison with the cities of the old world.

The prosperity which accident thrust upon the city certainly exceeded any recorded expectation or desire of William Penn. With this prosperity came many problems common to large cities and with which Philadelphia was ill prepared to cope. A religious community became the second seaport in the Kingdom and a farming community was overrun with immigrants. As it happened, and it was entirely a matter of chance and not planning, the city enjoyed the most favorable location of



FIG. 4. Old house on Penn Street between South and Lombard looking northwest [south of G, VII].

any of the five principal Atlantic seaports.¹⁰ Boston was a thriving town when Penn landed at the "Blue Anchor" [G, V]. It had pre-empted the coasting trade and continued in its maritime supremacy well into the nineteenth century. But, Philadelphia, the geographical center of the rapidly developing coast traffic, to offset her less advantageous harbor, was the natural gateway to the vast resources of the hinterland of Pennsylvania and the west.

The bridge over the Dock Creek at Chestnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets¹¹ [D, IV] might

¹⁰ Bridenbaugh, Carl, *Cities in the wilderness*, 332 et seq.

¹¹ Watson, John Fanning, *Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania, in the olden Time* 1: 371-372, Phila., Leary, Stuart, 1927.

well be celebrated as the Portal to the West. Market Street was impassable at Fourth Street because of the duck pond even when Franklin came to the city. But "Jersey" wagons and later "Conestoga" wagons could pass over the Dock at Chestnut Street to the Schuylkill, the Lancaster Road, and so to Fort Pitt and beyond. The sons and daughters of the religious pilgrims of 1683 found themselves engaged at this crossroads in trading with the northern and southern provinces, with outfitting settlers for the west and providing for the needs of the new immigrants from Europe. Each year brought more ships to the roadstead, at first laden with simple necessities, later with the most luxurious trifles that Europe could produce. By the end of the century, the city could boast of citizens like William Bingham, whose West Indian trade enabled him to maintain a town house and gardens occupying all the ground from Spruce



FIG. 5. The Shippen-Wistar House, Fourth and Locust Streets.

Street to Willing's Alley and from Third to Fourth Street in a magnificence comparable to the best houses of London, where, in fact, he spent a great part of his time [D, V].

So there was prosperity, but with it all the evils of a large seaport: wrangles between the Quakers and the Church,¹² between the Proprietors and the people, the

¹² Graydon, Alexander, *Memoirs of a life, chiefly passed in Pennsylvania, within the last sixty years; etc.*, 45, Harrisburgh, printed by John Wyeth, 1811. *A Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania, in which the Conduct of their Assemblies for several years past is impartially examined, and the true Cause of the continual Encroachments of the French displayed, more especially the secret Design of their late unwarrantable Invasion and Settlement upon the River Ohio. To which is annexed, An Easy Plan for restoring Quiet in the public Measures of that Province, and defeating the ambitious Views of the French in time to come. In a letter from a Gentleman who has resided many years in Pennsylvania to his friend in London, The Third*



FIG. 6. Powell House, hall and stairs. This building was recently restored by the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks. Courtesy of J. B. Lippincott Co.

struggle for dock and wharf privileges, litigation over property bounds, over "McMullen's Inch," near what is now Leithgow and Walnut Street [C, IV], the attempts to reconcile the social life of the sailors off the London ships and¹³ the West Indian ships, with the customs of the Quakers; Third Street south of Race [D, I] the resort of the sailors, enjoyed the name of "Helldown"; there was the matter of defence against the French and Indians and later the far more serious one of loyalty to the Crown or to Independence: questions certainly not in Penn's dream of a green country town.

But in all of this there was at least a choice, whether for good or evil, but the toll of the epidemics which plagued the city left no choice. Here was no survival of the fit—death knocked at the rich man's door as well as the poor man's and there was no recourse. Sickness was a normal condition; the birthrate was high. It was not unusual for a woman in her thirties to have had ten children; it was unusual if half of them lived to maturity, while a few might live to advanced ages purely by chance. There was little knowledge of medicine and practically none of hygiene.¹⁴ Men with a profound

Edition, London, printed for R. Griffiths in Paternoster-Row, 1756.

¹³ Scharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, 1: 185.

¹⁴ Drinker, Cecil K., *Not so long ago. A chronicle of medicine and doctors in colonial Philadelphia*, 136, N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1937.



FIG. 7. Water color of houses of Mrs. M. Harrison, Judge R. Peters, and Bishop White, Third and Walnut Streets [D, IV]. These are larger houses. Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

knowledge of political philosophy had an equally profound ignorance of the mechanics of living.

There was no dearth of food at any time in the community.¹⁵ The springs and wells were noted for their excellence from the earliest times. There was game in abundance, and after the first few years all of the meats in common use today. Wild grapes, cherries, and peaches were plentiful, cultivated fruits and vegetables were produced in quantity.¹⁶ The climate was good, at least as good as it is at present. Penn thought it remarkable and later travellers commented on it. But there was no protection against the ravages of sickness. A third of the company on the *Welcome* had died at sea and this was but a small omen of the disasters that were to visit the city.

The early houses, of course, had no glazed windows, and even in later years when glass was available the windows were not screened. So the settlers had no protection against the swarms of flies, mosquitoes, and other insects they found in the new country. They existed here in quantities unheard of in Europe. Peter Kalm makes particular reference to the clouds of mosquitoes saying that he was so badly bitten by them on his face and hands as to embarrass him in public and this aside from his personal discomfort.¹⁷

Hector St. John, in 1782, speaks of ridding his house of flies in a manner sufficiently alarming to others. He brings a hornet's nest filled with hornets, from the woods, and suspends it in lieu of an ornamental chandelier or glass globe, from the center of his parlor ceiling! Here, being unmolested, they do no harm to any of the family but pleased with warm and dry abode, they catch and subsist on numerous troublesome flies. These they constantly catch on the person and even the faces of his children.¹⁸

¹⁵ Pennypacker, Samuel Whitaker, *The settlement of Germantown*, A Letter from Cornelius Bom, dated October 12, 1684 to Jan Laurens, 102 et seq.

¹⁶ Benson, Adolph B., *Peter Kalm's travels*, 162.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 77., Drinker, Cecil K., M.D., *Not so long ago*, 32.

¹⁸ Watson, John Fanning, *Annals* 11: 411-412.

Such an heroic measure could only be warranted by a plague of serious proportions.

And to these trials, must be added the filth and odors of the growing seaport. Philadelphia, in common with London and other cities of the continent indulged in the practice of throwing all refuse and other matter in the streets, where it remained until devoured by the pigs, which were free to roam the cartways, or by dogs or gulls of whom there were many, or until the sun could in some measure neutralize this menace. The condition of the streets must have been incredible, measured by modern standards of hygiene.

Israel Israels in a letter to the Assembly in 1794 complains of the condition of Harmony Street from Third to Fourth.¹⁹ He owned a stable on the north side of



FIG. 8. Bishop White's House, built about 1783, as it is today. Courtesy of Charles E. Peterson.

the street near Fourth. He states that the filth is piled so high in the cartway that it is impossible for carts to enter his stables. This might be less remarkable were it not for the fact that the home of the Right Reverend William White, Bishop of the Episcopal Church [D, IV] and the most distinguished cleric in the province, was located at 309 Walnut Street. It is one hundred feet from Walnut Street to Harmony.

On a hot summer night with no screens at the windows and five to six feet of filth in a back street less than one hundred feet away, the condition might well try the patience of a Bishop of the Church. Nor was this all of the ordeal; only one hundred feet farther to the north

¹⁹ Letter in the files of the Department of Public Works, City of Philadelphia.

was the Dock Creek and Howell's tanyards. Part of the creek had been covered over as early as 1765, but the lower part was still an open sewer, receiving as well the refuse from the abutting tanyards. The stench was notorious, it was the subject of public protest. Little was done about it for some time, as a delegation of tanners had appeared before the Assembly and solemnly stated that while they had spent many years in the yards they had never noticed any objectionable odors.

While these might be termed discomforts, they were slight indeed compared to the tragedy of the epidemics.^{20, 21}

In addition to smallpox, which was constantly present in Philadelphia during the entire time of the diary [Diary of Elizabeth Drinker, 1758-1807], and to yellow fever, which appeared sporadically until 1793 and then as devastating epidemics in 1793, 1797, 1798, 1799, 1802, and 1805, there were in Philadelphia during the period of the Journal other serious infections. Some of these, notably malaria, were visitors each summer, both in Philadelphia and in the country along the Delaware River. . . . Of the other serious infections "hooping cough" or "Chin cough" and measles are most often mentioned. . . . Yellow fever came frequently to the colonies. Boston, New Haven, New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk and Charleston all experienced epidemics and knew the terror and demoralization that came with them. Of these cities, Philadelphia had the worst experiences with the disease. The town was comparatively large. The summer climate was tropically hot and moist, and the great areas of swampy ground were happy lands for mosquitoes. To this setting came many ships from the West Indies and from Central and South America. It was only necessary to land a patient with yellow fever, or as the ship was unloaded, to liberate infected mosquitoes in order to start an epidemic. A patient with yellow fever lying unattended, certainly unscreened, in one of the poorer houses along the Delaware River, and feasted upon by mosquitoes, became a focus from which the pestilence spread rapidly and widely. . . . In 1799, 1803 and 1805, the disease was so prevalent as to cause wholesale migrations from the city. . . .

Here are other entries from the Diary:

Aug. 27, 1793, the Yellow fever spreads in the City, many are taken with it and many other disorders . . . they have burned Tar in ye streets and taken other precautions, many families have left ye City. . . . Aug. 28, H.S.D. left us (to go to the City) at about 6 this morning. I gave him a small spoonful of Duffy's Ellixir (a purgative strongly alcoholized) and vinegar in a sponge, and a sprig of wormwood. . . . Sept. 4, A man here this afternoon informs of the death of one Stevens in Chestnut Street who bury'd 5 of his family²². . . . the care of the sick had broken down completely. On Aug. 31, the city authorities took over the estate of William Hamilton known as Bush Hill. This provided a large house, barn and stable, all of which were at once filled with yellow-fever patients. Mr. Hamilton and his tenants objected to this summary proceeding, but to their feelings little attention was paid. Almost at once the hospital partook of the general panic and demoralization. On the sixteenth of September, the managers of Bush Hill, after inspection of the hospital, reported: It exhibited as wretched a picture of human misery as ever existed. A profligate, abandoned set



FIG. 9. The Dilworth-Todd-Moylan House, Fourth and Walnut Streets [D, IV]. Courtesy of Charles E. Peterson.

of nurses and attendants (hardly any of good character could be procured at that time) who rioted on the provisions and comforts, prepared for the sick, who were left almost entirely destitute of every assistance. The dying and dead were indiscriminately mingled together. The ordure and other evacuation of the sick were allowed to remain in the most offensive state imaginable . . . it was in fact a great slaughter house, where victims were immolated on the altar of riot and intemperance. . . . No wonder, then, that a general dread of the place prevailed throughout the city, and that a removal to it was considered as the seal of death. . . .

Stephen Girard and Peter Helm reorganized the place and attended to the sick themselves.

Dr. Rush, the most celebrated medical practitioner in the city believed: "The origin of this fever was from the exhalations of gutters, docks, cellars, common sewers, ponds of stagnant water, and from the foul air of the ship formerly mentioned."²³ Dr. Drinker states:

With little knowledge of the structural changes produced by disease and none at all of the chemical and functional alterations resulting from illnesses, the physicians of 1800 were unable to visualize what was happening to the patient. . . . But they had to diagnose and prescribe. . . . Not only was their training for the battle inadequate, but they went into the contest bare-handed. Percussion of the chest by tapping with a finger in order to elicit sounds of air-containing lungs, or of solidification, such as occurs in pneumonia, was discovered by Auenbrugger in 1751, but was not popular until 1808 when it was taken up by Corvisart, the favorite physician of Napoleon. The stethoscope was invented by Laënnec in 1819. The clinical thermometer had no real place in practice until the time of Wunderlich, in 1868. Fever, so often mentioned, was unrecognized unless severe. . . . Nothing was known of urine analysis nor blood examination.

Sickness of one member of the family was a matter of intimate personal concern to all the rest of the family, and to neighbors and friends. No hospital took charge of the

²⁰ Drinker, Cecil K., *Not so long ago*, 103.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 108-110.

²² *Ibid.*, 117.

²³ *Ibid.*, 135, quotes from "An account of the Bilious Yellow Fever, as it Appeared in Philadelphia in the Year 1798," *Medical Inquiries and Observations*, 3rd. ed., 4, Benjamin Rush, Phila., 1809.

emergency, be it fever, childbirth, or accident. Illness was met at home and kept at home.²⁴

Medical practice at this time was not regulated by law, an Act to regulate the practice of Physic and Surgery came before the Assembly in 1794 but did not pass. Purgatives and bleeding were the accepted cures for almost everything including childbirth.

Had the city been laid out as William Penn first conceived it and its site, other than the most favored on the seaboard, many of these disasters might have been avoided or, at least, been less tragic. And in fact, the settlement was over fifty years old before the first severe plague demoralized the city. It was common practice, because of the plentiful supply of water to secure drinking water from wells in the cellar of the house or on the adjacent property, or from the public pumps, of which there were many. It was also the practice to install "necessaries," as they were then known, at some more or less convenient place near the house. But, as commerce and prosperity increased, so the number of houses increased, unfortunately on sub-divisions of the original tracts. Much of the sickness from which the city suffered so severely is attributable alone to this pollution of the water.²⁵

The significance of these unpleasant conditions may not be immediately apparent; however, their consequences had an immeasurable impact on the history of

the city. The mortality rate in the epidemic of 1793 was 22 per cent.²⁶ A catastrophe, today, involving the death of 400,000 of the citizens of the city would be a comparable disaster. During these visitations, the business of the city was at a standstill, and the people literally frantic with fear. The loss in 1793 has been estimated at \$2,000,000, equivalent to about \$50 for each person.

The migrations from the city to healthier communities increased the interest of the people in the unusual advantages of the nearby towns where they sought refuge, and were responsible in part for their rapid growth in the early nineteenth century. The prevalence of the epidemics and the apparent inability of the city fathers to curb them had an undoubted influence in the abandonment of Philadelphia as the Federal capital.

Despite these disasters and the ruthless destruction of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the name of modern progress, a remarkable number of these historic houses are still extant and largely unrecorded.

It can be said that nowhere in the country is there a comparable collection of early buildings. They constitute an invaluable part of the documentation of American history. They were lived in by, and were familiar sights to, the many great figures of the Revolutionary and the Federal eras. Their days are few unless a tardy appreciation makes a permanent place for them in the City plan.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 47.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

²⁶ Sharf, J. Thomas, and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia* 1: 470.

TWO CENTURIES OF PHILADELPHIA ARCHITECTURE 1700-1900 *

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WE have in Philadelphia many traditions of which we are justly proud. In the field of statesmanship, of the law, of philosophy, of medicine and scientific investigation, of the making of fine furniture and the teaching of painting, our history is long and illustrious. We have also the great tradition of our architecture. But few have ever recognized it and no one has attempted to record it. There is no history of Philadelphia architecture, decade by decade, movement by movement, to correspond to what exists, at least in partial form, for the music, the theater, and the literature of this city.¹ It is difficult to understand this, especially since we are dealing with a place which in the colonial period was our first city in point of size and wealth and the second in importance of the whole English-speaking world and which later became the first capital of the United States. There is indeed a tradition that old Philadelphia buildings were mean and dull, monotonous boxes of brick and wood, remarkable only for their excessively conservative plainness.

Those who have thought at all about Philadelphia architecture know that this is not true. They realize that the city, far from being an architectural backwater, was a center of constant innovation in the first two centuries of its history. Some of the results of these innovations are among the most distinguished examples of American colonial architecture. In the nineteenth century, moreover, on a number of occasions Philadelphia assumed an almost revolutionary leadership in architecture, thanks to a group of notable experimenters, whose real achievement is just now beginning to be recognized.

From the beginning Philadelphians built solidly and with regard for appearance. The earliest detailed picture of their work is a view by Peter Cooper of the city as it looked about 1720.² In that year Philadelphia was

only thirty-eight years old. Laid out in 1682 by Thomas Holme on the gridiron plan so much favored in Spanish America but seldom tried up to this time in the British colonies,³ the town had been since the 1690's almost entirely constructed of brick.⁴ The Cooper painting, like the numerous views which followed it, shows Philadelphia houses, some of which rose to four and five stories, remarkable for their solidity, their neatness, and their appearance of comfort (fig. 1).

Today it is doubtful whether any of these buildings remain upon their original foundations. One of them, the Letitia Street house (fig. 2), which originally stood in the mass of buildings at the right side of the painting [F, III], has been removed to a new site in Fairmount Park. The Cannon Ball house, an even older structure which may antedate the founding of the city,⁵ still exists far to the south in a woeful state of decay (fig. 3).

acquired in 1857 in London by the Library Company of Philadelphia. It has never been adequately studied for the considerable amount of architectural information which it contains, including the houses of Flemish and Dutch origin with gabled fronts facing the street, like those of London and Dublin, none of which now remain in Philadelphia.

³ The principal example in British America before Philadelphia was New Haven, Connecticut, laid out in 1638 (Garvan, Anthony N. B., *Architecture and town planning in colonial Connecticut*, 44-49 New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1951).

⁴ Robert Turner wrote to William Penn in 1685 "Now as to the Town of Philadelphia it goeth on in Planting and Building to admiration, both in the front and backward, and there are about 600 Houses in 3 years time. And since I built my Brick House the foundation of which was laid at thy going . . . many brave Brick Houses are going up." Richard Frame in 1692 declared in verse

"A City and Towns were raised then,
Wherin we might abide
.
The best of Houses then was known,
To be of Wood and Clay
But now we build of Brick and Stone,
Which is a better way."

For these and other similar citations see Myers, Albert Cook, *Narratives of early Pennsylvania, West New Jersey and Delaware, 1630-1707*, N. Y., Scribner's, 1912.

⁵ According to H. D. Eberlein, documents indicate that a house could have stood on the site as early as 1657. The greater part of the present structure seems to date, however, from between 1714 and 1720. The name of the house is derived from an incident in the siege of Fort Mifflin by the British in 1777, when on November 15 a cannon ball was fired through one of the walls (*op. cit.*, 30-33). The Letitia Street house, which formally stood on a small thoroughfare between Front and Second Streets, running from Market to Chestnut Streets is assigned to the years between 1703 and 1715. It was rebuilt in Fairmount Park in 1883 (*ibid.*, 112).

* This paper is the outgrowth of an address delivered by the writer on the occasion of the annual meeting of the National Council for Historic Sites and Buildings in Philadelphia, October 28, 1951. The examples of Philadelphia architecture here discussed are limited to buildings which were still standing at that time.

¹ The nearest approach to a general history of Philadelphia architecture is Eberlein, Harold Donaldson, and Cortland Van Dyck Hubbard, *Portrait of a colonial city, Philadelphia, 1670-1838*, Phila., Lippincott, 1939. For recent accounts of the colonial architecture of the region see Waterman, Thomas T., *Dwellings of colonial America*, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1950, and Morrison, Hugh, *Early American architecture*, chap. 16 N. Y., Oxford Univ. Press, 1952.

² Entitled "The South East Prospect of The City of Philadelphia," this treasure of American topographical painting was

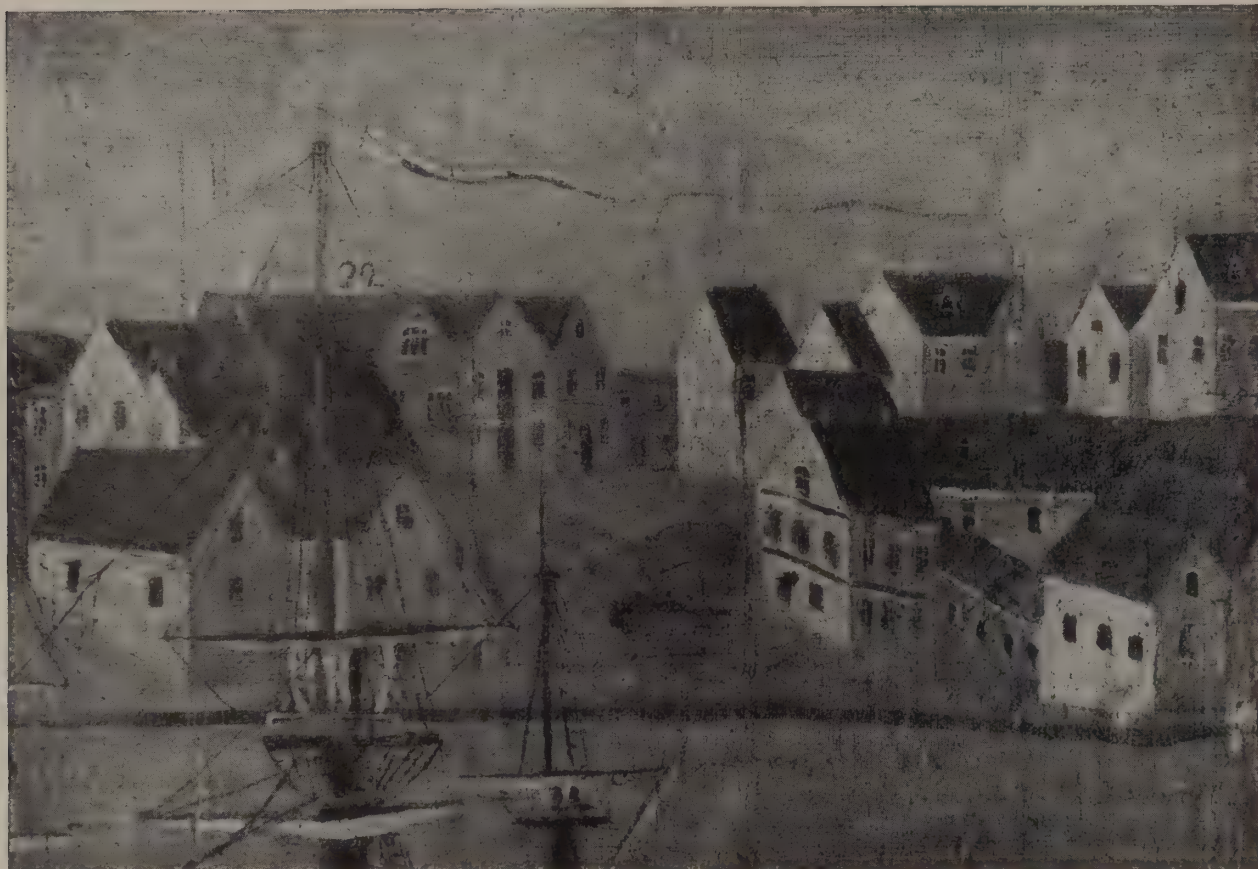


FIG. 1. Peter Cooper. South East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia. Detail. The Library Company of Philadelphia. Photo. C. T. Atkinson.

These two buildings possess, in addition to their steep and still medieval gables, features typical of early Philadelphia construction. The first and most important is the roof-strip or pent-roof of wood across the gable end of the brick exterior. This is closely related to those of the Peter Cooper view, which also contains an instance of the multiple pent-roof, between upper and lower stories, which reached its most developed form in that remarkable monument of Philadelphia regionalism, the Monastery or Gorgas house (*ca.* 1750) on Wissahickon Creek (fig. 4). Commonly used in lieu of a beltcourse with constructions of both brick and stone, the Pennsylvania pent-roof appears alike on country houses and farm buildings, on city mansions and early row houses.⁶ Generally considered utilitarian in purpose, its origin has been widely discussed.⁷

⁶ See the three houses with pent-roof and cove cornice, their original windows and shutters intact, at 112-116 Cuthbert Street. [F, II].

⁷ The most recent explanation, given by Mr. Waterman (*op. cit.*, 139) is that the pent-roof was originally employed in the Rhineland to protect half-timbered walls from rain. He suggests that German settlers brought the custom to Pennsylvania, where it ceased to be a practical necessity and became an architectural tradition after half-timbering was abandoned in favor of building in brick and stone.

The Letitia Street house, architecturally more advanced than the Cannon Ball and more urban in character, has other elements representative of early Philadelphia building. One is the concave cornice of wood along the roof line, demonstrating a degree of refinement rare at the time in America. The second is the straight door hood on carved brackets, which relates the Letitia Street house to the rows of London houses of the period of 1700 to 1730, like those of Great James and Ormond Streets, where practically identical hoods appear at almost every door.⁸ The slightly baroque flavor of the brackets is echoed in still another characteristic of early Philadelphia architecture, which also appears in the Cooper view (fig. 1). That is the prominent façade balcony of wood mentioned by Robert Turner in 1685,⁹ one of which seems to have been preserved at Bellaire in League Island Park, a fine country residence of about 1720.

⁸ Pevsner, Nikolaus, *The buildings of England, London except the cities of London and Westminster*, 220, fig. 26a, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books. There are also contemporary examples in Holland.

⁹ Turner wrote in 1685 "we build most houses with balconies" (Myers, *op. cit.*). A house facing the market square of Cambridge, England, has a balcony with a semi-circular hood above it almost exactly like the one at Bellaire.

The pent-roof, which later joined itself to the hood until they became an integrated whole, as in some of the houses of Germantown, is the outstanding local element of our colonial architecture. Beginning in the late seventeenth century the simple style which it dominated extends without interruption to the Revolution and in outlying places well beyond it.¹⁰ Associated with Philadelphia as the cultural center of the Middle Colonies, this vernacular expression is found at various sites throughout the area, so that it constitutes, as has been recognized, a kind of Delaware River style.¹¹ With it go other prominent characteristics. One is the use of patterned bricks. For houses this generally implies a Flemish bond with alternate glazed headers, a practice common throughout the colonies, which in Philadelphia, however, continued until after the Revolution¹² and thereby contributed to the legend of the



FIG. 2. The Letitia Street House. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

unchanging quality of our buildings. The early Philadelphia churches, like Gloria Dei (1700) and Trinity Oxford (1711), have criss crossed lozenges of dark blue bricks on their entrance fronts, after the pattern of certain fifteenth-century English models¹³ (fig. 5). They

¹⁰ The steep pented gable of early eighteenth-century Philadelphia building is seen as late as 1793 at Spring Mill in Chester County and the continuous pent-roof combined with a triangular door hood is preserved as a living symbol in a Pennsylvania Frakturschrift ephemerality text now at the Philadelphia Museum of Art which is dated 1843.

¹¹ Waterman, *op. cit.*, 117.

¹² The Reynolds-Morris house of 1787, for example, has a façade of this archaic bond, which two years later was applied to the walls of the Roman Catholic church of the Holy Trinity at Sixth and Spruce Streets [A, V].

¹³ Among others the tower of Hatfield Old Palace, and the courtyards of Fulham Palace and Hampton Court.



FIG. 3. The Cannon Ball House. This and all other photos by R. C. Smith, unless otherwise noted.

thus establish a Philadelphia precedent for the spectacular zigzags of red, white, and blue that emblazon some eighteenth-century houses across the Delaware in Salem County, New Jersey.¹⁴

Another regionalism centering in Philadelphia is the angle or corner fireplace, which enables the same chimney to serve two adjacent rooms, as in the Letitia Street house (fig. 6). These became so much esteemed in this area that they were employed for row houses on Fifth

¹⁴ Sickler, Joseph S., *The old houses of Salem County*, Salem, N. J., Sunbeam Publishing Co., 2nd ed., 1949.



FIG. 4. The Gorgas House.



FIG. 5. Trinity Church, Oxford.

Street in a Philadelphia plan of about 1750¹⁵ and were provided for nearly every room in the great houses which William Trent built at Trenton in 1719 and John Potts erected at Potts' Grove, Pennsylvania, in 1752.

¹⁵ Norris of Fairhill Papers, miscellaneous volume, p. 80. See also the early eighteenth-century houses of Elfreth's Alley [F, 1] and those at 112-116 Cuthbert Street.



FIG. 6. The Letitia Street house. The Dining Room. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

It has been suggested that the angle fireplace was a Swedish element introduced along with a characteristic Swedish ground plan into our regional architecture by Scandinavian colonists before the coming of the English.¹⁶ Because, however, the useful device of the angle fireplace was not a peculiarity of any single part of northern Europe and since, from the time of Inigo Jones it was used with frequency in English building,¹⁷ it seems logical to attribute it to the architectural tradition of the mother country. So also the great use of field stone in the area around Philadelphia is distinctly English and at the same time a part of the rural practice of northern Europe, although the plan and scale of our bank barns of stone were probably brought by German settlers to Pennsylvania.

In the 1720's, at the time of Peter Cooper's view, an academic current began to make itself felt in the architecture of Philadelphia along with the vernacular tradi-



FIG. 7. Woodford.

tion. Successful merchants and men of affairs like James Logan introduced in their brick country houses the balanced formal façades and hipped roofs of the simpler Queen Anne residences of England, themselves derived in part, it appears, from Dutch houses of the seventeenth century.¹⁸ Logan's Stenton in German-

¹⁶ Waterman, *op. cit.*, 123-126.

¹⁷ Mr. Waterman states that the corner fireplace was almost unknown in Great Britain except in academic designs (*ibid.*, 126). This is not entirely true because the writer has seen examples in the London borough of Holborn and in Dublin which are contemporary with and stylistically similar to the Letitia Street house.

¹⁸ The immediate prototype for these houses was probably the residence at the manor of Pennsbury on the Delaware at Morrisville, Pennsylvania, which was constructed for William Penn in the late 1680's. Long ago destroyed, it has been recently rebuilt with great care. The type may well have had its origin not in England but in the work of the mid-seventeenth-century Dutch Palladians, Jacob van Campen and Pieter Post, whose designs for small brick country houses with hipped roofs fre-

town (1728) and its close relative, the slightly earlier Hope Lodge at Whitemarsh (1723), which has the academic distinction of an ornamental blind niche in the space above the doorway, are in most respects Philadelphia counterparts of the great Tidewater plantation and town houses of Virginia and Maryland of the time.

These buildings contain those painted, panelled chambers which aroused the scorn of the austere Pastorius.¹⁹ Here in the 1720's vernacular-trained carpenters struggled to interpret the classical orders—unsuccessfully for Samuel Morris in a picturesque but inaccurate version of Corinthian capitals in the hall of Hope Lodge, successfully and with remarkably stately effect at Governor Keith's stone manor house of Graeme Park (1722), not far away.

From that time on Philadelphia assumed a leadership in fine woodcarving of every conceivable sort, which not only produced the greatest local school of colonial cabi-



FIG. 8. Belmont. The Hall. Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

netmaking but also achieved the first Palladian interiors in America. We must exclude for the moment the great rooms of the state house, with their friezes, masks, and cartouches, for experts have recommended caution in assigning those three apartments to the 1740's, as we have been accustomed to do in this city. We need not hesitate, on the other hand, to accept the interior of Christ Church [E, II] as a product of the years following 1727.²⁰ That beautiful room, illustrated elsewhere

quently embellished with cupolas are published in *Les ouvrages d'architecture ordonnez par Pierre Post*, Leyden, 1715. Stenton, Hope Lodge, and other Queen Anne houses of the Philadelphia area are described in Eberlein, *op. cit.*

¹⁹ Francis Daniel Pastorius, one of the founders of Germantown, wrote in 1700 of his cave on the banks of the Delaware "Herein we lived more Contentedly than many nowadays in their painted and wainscotted Palaces" (Myers, *op. cit.*, 404-405, n. 10).

²⁰ The minutes of the vestry indicate that the greater part of



FIG. 9. Drawing Room from the Stamper-Blackwell house, Philadelphia, 1764. The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum. Photo. Gilbert Ask.

in this volume, can be called the first successful attempt to reproduce in the colonies the full English Palladian ordinance of the time, albeit with a few false steps like combining an Ionic entablature with shafts and capitals of the Doric.²¹ Here then in Philadelphia, well before Peter Harrison introduced the manner to Rhode Island,²² this premier American church of the colonial period attained a convincing approximation to the academic style of the Palladians, which was just beginning to be felt at the time in the religious architecture of Great Britain. The lavishness with which the decoration of this and other buildings was subsequently completed, in a style more reminiscent of James Gibbs than the Palladian Burlington, produced in Philadelphia an impressive contrast with the extreme simplicity of the architecture of the Quakers, whose insistence upon using materials for what they were established and maintained here in the age of baroque dissimulations, a tradition of pure lines and bare surfaces, that is the real forerunner of modern functional architecture.

By the middle of the eighteenth century it was current practice in fine house building to utilize Palladian features, not infrequently, as at Woodford in 1756 (fig. 7), in an interesting combination with the vernacular pent-

the work on the interior was accomplished between 1740 and 1744. The late Georgian pulpit was finished by John Folwell in 1770.

²¹ In the Venetian window of the apse.

²² This English ship captain and architectural amateur is given credit for being the first known architect to use correctly the Palladian formulas of ornament. This he did in the Redwood Library at Newport, Rhode Island, which he designed in 1748 (Kimball, Fiske, *Colonial amateurs and their models*: Peter Harrison, *Architecture* 53: 115-160, 185-190, 209, 1949; Bridenbaugh, Carl, *Peter Harrison, first American architect*, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1949; Downing, Antoinette F., and Vincent J. Scully, Jr., *The architectural heritage of Newport, Rhode Island*, 72-85, Cambridge, Harvard, 1952.



FIG. 10. Mount Pleasant.

roof. About the same time Philadelphia made the acquaintance of the Italian baroque and the French rococo. The ceiling of the Palladian hall at Belmont, roughly contemporary with Woodford and probably the finest example of plaster work of its time in this country, employs a grand design of ovals enriched with musical targes, ribbons, consoles, and shells quite similar to those at Clandon Park in Surrey attributed to the Italian stuccatore Artari (fig. 8).²³ In the meantime the rococo patterns of the style of George II were entering Philadelphia through the medium of engravings and silver and French craftsmen like Gabriel Valois²⁴ were coming to reinforce the efforts of Philadelphia carvers as they interpreted the style of Thomas Chippendale in the golden decade before the Revolution (fig. 9).

To this period, from about 1760 to 1776, belong the greatest colonial residences, which offer the invigorating contrast of Palladian sobriety side by side with baroque or rococo details of decoration, as had been the fashion

²³ Reproduced in Hussey, Christopher, *English country houses open to the public*, fig. 176, N. Y., Scribner's, 1951.

²⁴ "Carver and Gilder from Paris, late from London," he advertised in 1773 and 1774 (Prime, Alfred Coxe, *The arts & crafts in Philadelphia, Maryland and South Carolina, 1721-1785* 1: 225-226 Topsfield, Walpole society, 1929).



FIG. 11. Chalkley Hall.

in England in the first half of the eighteenth century. In design as well as in materials of construction these houses vary greatly. Chief Justice Chew's Germantown mansion of Cliveden (1763), because of its gable roof, attenuated central pavilion and the pent that appears at the sides, still suggests the old field stone vernacular, in spite of its Doric doorway, baroque dormers, and the Italianate sculpture of urns, finials, and garden statues. Mount Pleasant (1761), Captain McPherson's palace on the Schuylkill, in an unusually developed combination of wood, stone, and brick, is the finest Philadelphia example of the standard ensemble of Georgian estate planning—a main block set between identical advance buildings—following the example given in the early years of the century by the governor's palace in Williamsburg (fig. 10). The main block of Chalkley Hall (1776), the last of the colonial mansions of Frankford, is an almost unrivalled specimen of the purity of late Georgian linear arrangement. Built practically entirely of cut stone imported from England, it is virtually an exact repetition of John Hawk's first design of 1766 for Governor Tryon's lost palace in North Carolina



FIG. 12. John Hawks. First Design for Governor Tryon's Palace. Courtesy of the New-York Historical Society.

(figs. 11 and 12).²⁵ Handsome in Sir William Chambers' monumental way, it is perhaps the most British of all surviving American colonial houses.

Chalkley Hall has one thing in common with Mount Pleasant, the Powel house, Cliveden, and all the other great late colonial residences of this city and its environs. None of their authors are known. We have no way of identifying a single one of them with any architect, carpenter, mason, or cabinetmaker.²⁶ The extraordinary anonymity of these buildings may account in part for their neglect by art historians. There is always a magic in names and we have but one to conjure with. Robert Smith was Philadelphia's only real architectural personality of the colonial period. An emigrant from Scotland, he built St. Peter's Church [D, VI] and the famous Walnut Street jail [B, V] and presented Princeton with Nassau Hall, which is still the best of its build-

²⁵ Since Governor Tryon wrote in January, 1767, that Hawks was soon to go to Philadelphia "to hire able workmen" (Waterman, T. T., *Early architecture of North Carolina*, 32, Chapel Hill, Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1941), it is quite possible that he left a copy of his design here or one of the workmen, returning to Philadelphia after Tryon's palace was completed, may have brought the plan back with him. In either case it could have been the inspiration for the enlarging of Chalkley Hall. On the other hand, however, it must be remembered that generally similar designs figure in a number of the most influential English architectural books of the period.

²⁶ Fiske Kimball has called this problem "the prize puzzle of the study of colonial architecture" (in reviewing Waterman's *Dwellings of colonial America*, *Art Bulletin* 33: 1, 1951).

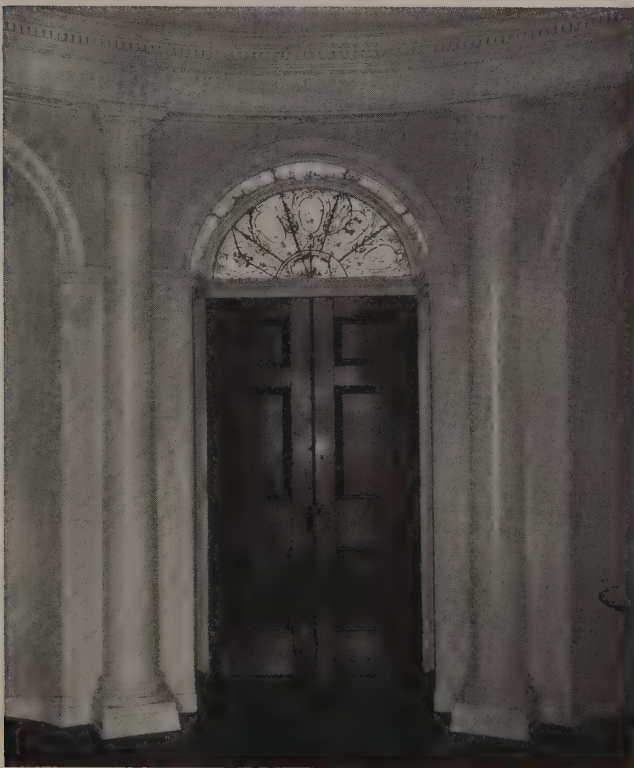


FIG. 13. The Woodlands. Detail of the Entrance Hall.



FIG. 14. The Pennsylvania Hospital. The North Door.

ings.²⁷ But Smith remains, in spite of this, a colorless individual, not to be compared with the glamorous William Buckland of Annapolis or the even more glorious Peter Harrison of New England.

After the Revolution, Philadelphia became a center of the new classicism that began in England with Robert Adam and grew with Sir John Soane and the Prince Regent's builders. But still the dearth of personalities associated with our best surviving Federal buildings and the destruction of so many more have tended to de-emphasize the importance of Philadelphia's achievement in the age of McIntire and Bulfinch. It is true that the great figures worked here, the West Indian amateur William Thornton,²⁸ the French engineer Pierre L'En-

²⁷ For the biography of Robert Smith see the paper on Carpenters' Hall [D, IV] by Charles E. Peterson, which is included in this volume.

²⁸ Dr. William Thornton, who was later to design the Capitol in Washington, in 1789 won a competition for the building of the Library Company of Philadelphia [C, IV], an elegant structure of Federal style which stood on a site at Fifth and Library Streets overlooking Independence Square until it was destroyed in 1880. For a detailed study of this lost building see Peterson, Charles E., *Library Hall, home of the Library Company of Philadelphia, 1790-1880*, *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc.* 95 (3): 266-285, 1951, reprinted, with additions, in this volume.



FIG. 15. Lemon Hill.

fant,²⁹ and the English professional architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe.³⁰ But all of their buildings long ago disappeared and most of our lesser men have not yet attained the distinction of respectable documentation.

²⁹ In 1794 L'Enfant designed and began the construction of a town house for Robert Morris on Chestnut Street between Seventh and Eighth Streets. Because of the latter's financial difficulties, it was never completed. The house, which is known from an engraving made by William Birch in 1800, had such characteristic late eighteenth-century French details as marble reliefs over the long ground-story windows and a curb roof, which made it unique in this country (Caemmerer, H. Paul, *Life of Pierre Charles L'Enfant*, 256-263, Washington, National Republic Pub. Co., 1950).

³⁰ Latrobe, the inaugurator of neo-classic architecture in the United States, as well as the founder of professional practice, built two key structures in Philadelphia, the Ionic Bank of Pennsylvania of 1798 [E, IV] and the Doric Pumping Station in Center Square of 1800, which were among the earliest examples of his work in the United States.



FIG. 17. William Strickland. Naval Hospital.

John Dorsey, who probably designed the first building of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1806, is still almost unknown.³¹ We cannot with certainty claim for William Hamilton the credit of authorship for the rebuilding of his villa, the Woodlands, in the late 1780's. The wonderfully articulated plan of this dwelling is at once more modern, in point of comfort, and more archeological, from the standpoint of ornament, than anything of the period in America. Here as never before careful provision was made for corridors and cupboards and a maximum of light was provided by a

³¹ Dorsey, the man who in 1793 advertised "ornamental stone, for the enrichment of exterior architecture" for sale at his shop on North Third Street (Prime, *op. cit.*, 2: 316, Topsfield, Walpole Society, 1932), was a successful merchant interested in the arts and a founder of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. In 1809 he sent to William Meredith a skillful plan and elevation of an elegant Regency country house of his own authorship, derived from Henry Holland's original Royal Pavilion at Brighton (*ca.* 1785), which is now among the Meredith papers of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Dorsey's most ambitious undertaking seems to have been a large building on Chestnut Street, which was one of the first important examples of the Gothic Revival in Philadelphia. It was offered for sale in 1810 and pulled down in 1853. For information about it I am obliged to Mr. Charles E. Peterson.

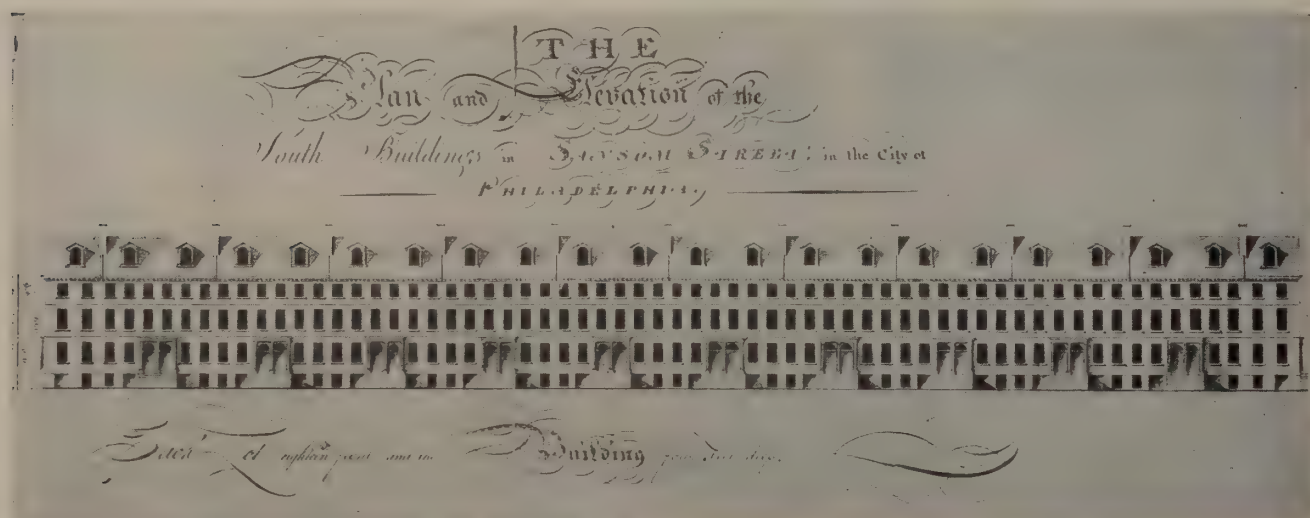


FIG. 16. Thomas Carstairs. Houses on Sanson Street. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

variety of curving walls.³² The tiny circular entrance hall enriched with niches and delicate columns, is derived, like those of the Adam houses in England, from the plans of ancient Roman buildings (fig. 13), while the pedimented portico overlooking the Schuylkill is one of the earliest instances in American domestic architecture of this characteristic classical feature of eighteenth-century English country houses. The career of the master carpenter David Evans the Younger, who seems from the minutes to have built on his own design the Adamesque center house of the Pennsylvania Hospital in the decade between 1793 and 1802, is still surrounded with shadows. The building is a fascinating instance of the battle between conservatism and progress in Philadelphia architecture, for although the front and top are pure Adam, the rear façade was constructed according to a design of Samuel Rhoads for the front elevation half



FIG. 18. Thomas U. Walter. Girard College.

a century older in date.³³ The huge north door, which rises to the uncommon height of fifteen feet, is the most monumental example of a favorite arrangement among Philadelphia doorways (fig. 14). This formula of engaged columns or pilasters supporting a flat lintel seems to have begun at the tower of the state house (1750-1756) and was continued through a series of important constructions, including the Powel house [D, V], Grumblethorpe, the Shippen-Wistar house [C, V], Vernon, and for a time in the nineteenth century the north façade of the state house itself. Another important example of our Federal architecture, Lemon Hill,

³² This important plan was published by Kimball, Fiske, *The domestic architecture of the American colonies and of the early republic*, 192, N. Y., Scribner's, 1922.

³³ Rhoads's design is preserved in an eighteenth-century engraving of the proposed south façade of the hospital known as the J. C. Dawkin view.



FIG. 19. John Haviland. Franklin Institute.

whose Regency rotunda is certainly contemporary with those used by Bulfinch in Boston and Waltham, is also an anonymous performance, probably of the last decade of the eighteenth century (fig. 15). Thomas Carstairs, of whom very little is known, has left his mark on this period by designing a row of identical houses on Sansom Street in imitation of those of the squares and terraces fashionable in London and Dublin since the middle of the eighteenth century (fig. 16).³⁴ Although the Car-

³⁴ The original drawing owned by the Library Company of Philadelphia, was first published by Kimball, *op. cit.*, 198, fig.



FIG. 20. Thomas U. Walter. Drawing for the Preston Retreat. Photo. C. T. Atkinson.



FIG. 21. Anonymous Watercolor of the South Side of Walnut Street between Third and Fourth Streets about 1830. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

stairs plan is by no means the first instance of row building in Philadelphia, it seems to have influenced the schemes for identical row houses that came after it and which are so prominently associated with this city that in Trenton the name Philadelphia Row was applied to a block of similar residences.³⁵

153. "Lately arrived from London" in 1784 (*Pennsylvania Packet*, Feb., 5, 1784), Carstairs was defeated by Thornton five years later in the competition for the Library Company building.

³⁵ Federal Writers' Project of the WPA, *New Jersey; a guide to its present and past*, 399, N. Y., Hastings House, 1946.



FIG. 22. J. E. Carver. Drawing for a Greek Revival Residence, circa 1840. Library of the School of Fine Arts, University of Pennsylvania.

In the 1820's, a century after the Cooper view and the building of Stenton, Hope Lodge, and Graeme Park, Philadelphia acquired prime leadership in the Greek Revival. This was due in large measure to the brilliance of our native architects, William Strickland and Thomas U. Walter, and the Englishman John Haviland, whose lectures on architecture at the Franklin Institute in 1824 comprised the first courses of professional training offered in this country. The work of these men is still in large measure preserved. It constitutes, with such monuments as Strickland's Second Bank of the United States (1819-1824) [C, IV], Naval Hospital (1828-1832), and Merchants' Exchange (1832-1834) [E, IV], Walter's Girard College (1833-1848), Philadelphia Savings Fund Society Bank (1839) [D, IV], and Preston Retreat (1837-1839), and Haviland's Church of St. Andrew (1822) and Franklin Institute (1826) [A, III], the finest group of temple structures ever created in America (figs. 17, 18, and 19). These buildings are outstanding not only for their fine proportions and the exquisite carving of their decoration, but also for the original approach of all three architects in designing towers and cupolas (fig. 20). Unfortunately, we can no longer enjoy the wealth of Greek residences, shop fronts, hotels, and theaters that formerly filled the old quarters of the city, so extensive has been their destruction. Old drawings, however, some by the minor architects John Riddell, J. E. Carver, J. D. Koecker, and Thomas S. Stewart, help to evoke this vanished elegance (figs. 21 and 22).

The first half of the nineteenth century has been called the great age of Philadelphia architecture. Dominated by what Mrs. Tuthill in 1848 called "the perfect mania

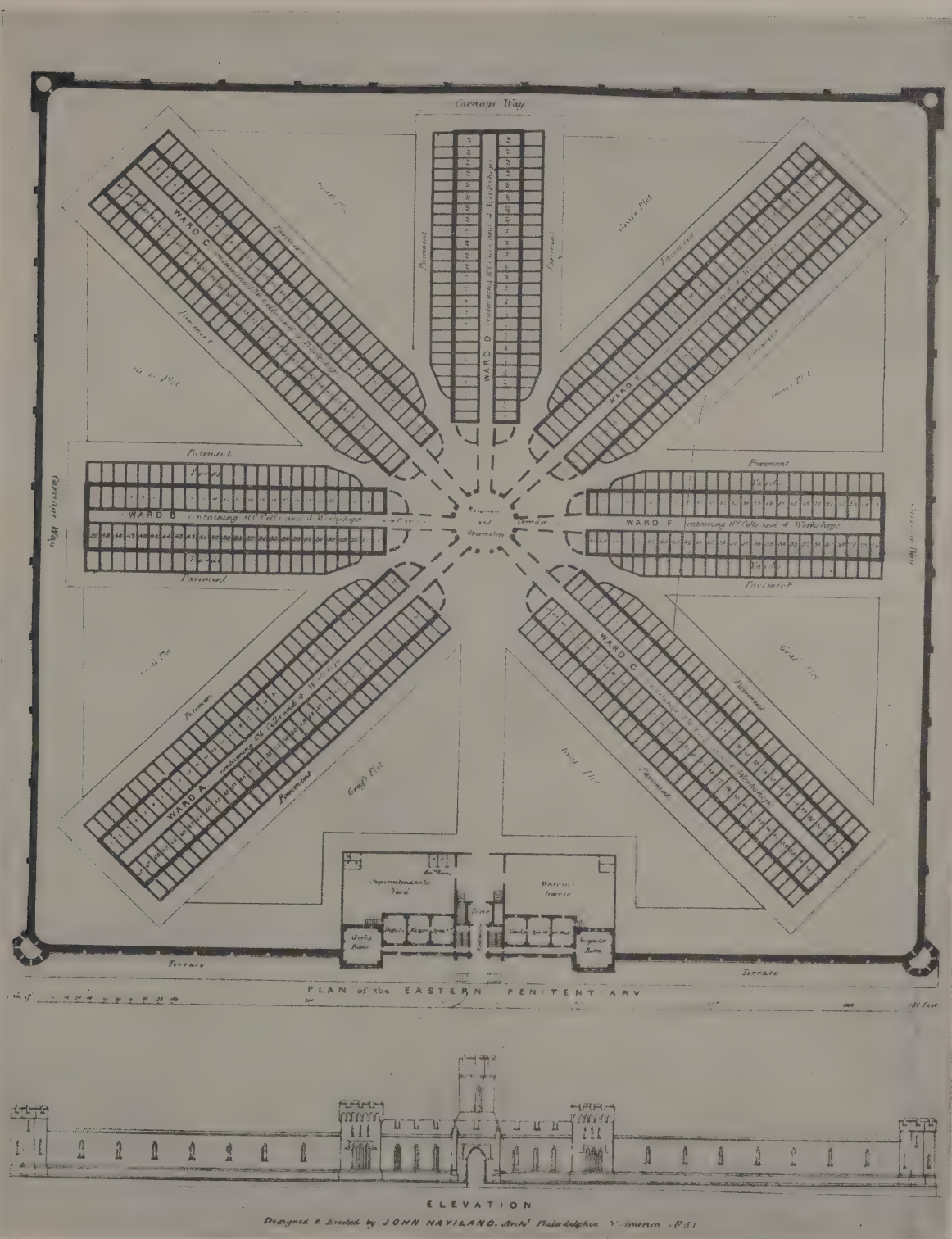


FIG. 23. John Haviland. Design for the Eastern State Penitentiary. From Crawford, W., *Report on the Penitentiaries of the United States*.



FIG. 24. Thomas U. Walter. Moyamensing Prison. The Debtors' Wing.

for the Grecian orders,"³⁶ the period also coincided with the rage for revivals of all kinds that characterized the romantic era. Little of importance has survived from the first phase of the Gothic Revival. The best example of that taste is the Eastern Penitentiary, begun by John Haviland in 1823, whose massively handsome stone walls still encase the system of radiating, spoke-like wings that established a new form of prison architecture in this country, attracted the visits of European specialists³⁷ and secured for the architect a sheaf of commissions for jails in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and elsewhere (fig. 23). In the Egyptian Revival, especially favored for prisons and cemeteries, Philadelphia again asserted its leadership. In 1838 Haviland built the grandest example of the style, the old Tombs prison in New York,

³⁶ Tuthill, Mrs. Louisa C., *History of architecture from the earliest times*, 300, Phila., 1848.

³⁷ Crawford, William, *Report on the penitentiaries of the United States*, London, 1835.



FIG. 25. Thomas U. Walter. Drawing for the Gate of Laurel Hill Cemetery. Courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

but already in 1836 Thomas U. Walter here in Philadelphia had achieved one of the most impressive Egyptian designs in the brown stone Debtors' wing of Moyamensing prison (fig. 24), which is closely associated with his rejected design of the same year for the gateway to Laurel Hill cemetery (fig. 25). Philadelphia's leadership embraces also the Renaissance Revival, which gave us John Notman's pioneer palazzo, the Athenaeum hall [B, V] of 1845-1847 (fig. 26). Based on Sir Charles Barry's designs for clubs in London and Manchester, it repeats not only the characteristic astylar façades of those buildings but also their handsome col-

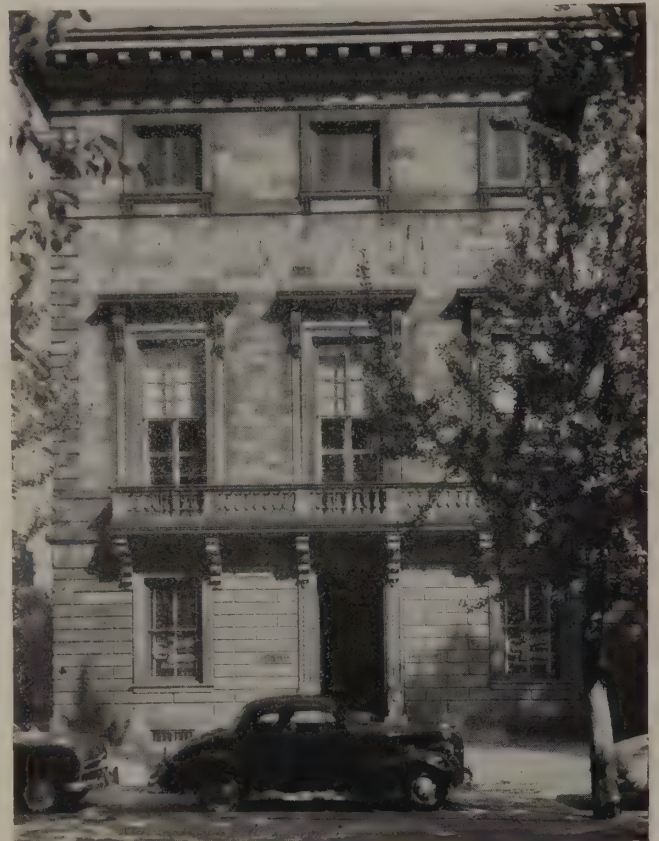


FIG. 26. John Notman. The Athenaeum of Philadelphia. Photo. Wayne Andrews.

umnar halls.³⁸ John Notman's great influence in the city³⁹ established a Renaissance current in the middle of the century which was to lead through Samuel Sloan and his *Architectural Review* of 1869-1871, the first

³⁸ Smith, Robert C., *John Notman and the Athenaeum building*, Phila., Athenaeum, 1951.

³⁹ During his career here, between 1831 and 1865, John Notman built for himself a considerable reputation. This was based in large measure upon his introduction of the Italian villa as a new type of residence, which made him the forerunner and rival of A. J. Davis of New York and Henry Austin of New Haven, and his ability to handle a large number of commissions for important churches, which gave him a position in Philadelphia not unlike that of Richard Upjohn in New York.

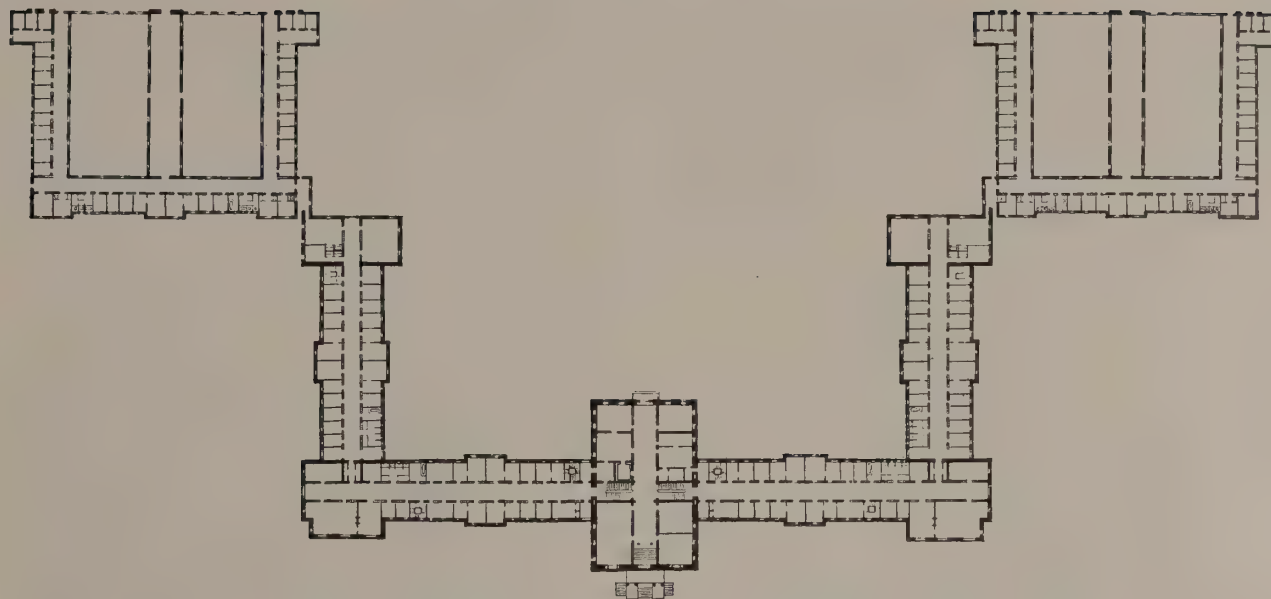


FIG. 27. Samuel Sloan. Pennsylvania Hospital Mental Department. From Kirkbride, T. S., *Hospitals for the Insane*.

purely architectural periodical in America, to the grandeur of John McArthur's city hall of 1888, which is probably the largest and tallest expression in the United States of the Victorian passion for the towering style of the French Renaissance.

From the beginning of its history Philadelphia has been associated with great humanitarian and commercial undertakings. The impact of these associations is abundantly felt in our nineteenth-century architecture

and especially in three buildings, which fortunately surviving are of considerable importance in the architectural history of the nation. In 1836 the English architect Isaac Holden designed for the managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital a new edifice in West Philadelphia to be used exclusively for the treatment of the insane.⁴⁰ This structure, augmented under the direction of Dr. Thomas S. Kirkbride, was the first American hospital on the echelon plan, wherein a series of extended wings permits a maximum of isolation for the separate wards. Duplicated for the same hospital by Samuel Sloan in 1856 (fig. 27) and by John Notman at Trenton in 1848, this Philadelphia plan soon became the accepted form for such buildings in this country. Another architect of Philadelphia, John Haviland, created the first American cast-iron façade for a bank at Pottsville in 1830. In 1848 James Bogardus began in New York the earliest building with both frame and exterior of metal and two years later G. P. Cummings undertook in Philadelphia for the Penn Mutual Insurance Company [E, IV] the first building of the kind in the city (fig.

⁴⁰ Little is known of Isaac Holden, who came from Manchester in 1823. He practiced as an architect and builder in Philadelphia with his brother from 1826 until 1838, when he returned to England two years after winning the Pennsylvania Hospital project in competition with John Haviland and William Strickland (Morton, Thomas G., *History of the Pennsylvania Hospital, 1751-1893*, 165, Phila., 1897). In volume 4 of the Haviland papers now on deposit at the library of the University of Pennsylvania there are records of payment of several hundred dollars to Isaac Holden and his brother, apparently as wages for workmen employed under their direction at Port Carbon. In 1834 Holden enlarged the old church of St. Mary in Burlington, New Jersey (Hills, George Morgan, *History of the church in Burlington, New Jersey*, 424, Trenton, 2nd ed., 1885). On May 30, 1837, he was named to a committee to consider a new building for the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.



FIG. 28. G. P. Cummings. The Penn Mutual Building.



FIG. 29. William L. Johnston. The Jayne Building. Courtesy U. S. Natl. Park Service.

28).⁴¹ Decorated in the Italian Renaissance manner, then enjoying great fashion in Philadelphia, this iron palazzo is now one of the oldest surviving examples in the United States of the new kind of construction. The Penn Mutual building is rendered the more interesting because it forms with adjacent structures a superb ensemble of iron architecture, the details of which are frequently of great delicacy and distinction.

In this same year of 1849 Philadelphia was acquiring its first skyscraper. Dr. David Jayne, a manufacturer of patent medicines, decided to erect an extensive building on lower Chestnut Street to house his successful

⁴¹ Peterson, Charles E., American notes: the Penn Mutual building, Philadelphia, 1850-51, *Jour. Soc. Arch. Hist.* 9 (4): 24-25, 1950.

Cummings is listed in the Philadelphia directories from 1844 to 1863. In 1848 he designed the Sansom Street Hall [A, IV] on Sansom Street west of Sixth to be used for a public bath and Lyceum. The first story was appropriately decorated with an order from the baths of Diocletian. The upper area, occupied by "societies, schools, &c.," was decorated in the Italian style (Smith, Richard A., *Philadelphia as it is in 1852*, 77, Phila., 1852). From the same source we learn that Cummings also built about the same time Swain's Building on Chestnut at Seventh [A, III] "in the Italian or Palladian style of architecture, with a red sandstone front" (*ibid.*, 77). This architect also contributed three designs to Walter, T. U. and J. J. Smith, *Two hundred designs for cottages and villas*, Phila., 1846.

enterprise [F, IV]. Before a fire in 1872 destroyed its terminal tower, the structure rose to the then extraordinary height of ten stories. Built of granite in traditional masonry instead of the new metal armature of its contemporary the Penn Mutual building, the Jayne edifice anticipated by two decades the first multiple-story office buildings of Chicago and New York.⁴² Long attributed incorrectly to John McArthur Jr., this proto-skyscraper of Philadelphia, thanks to a chance discovery of mine, is now known to be the work of William L. Johnston, who designed it just before his death in 1849



FIG. 30. Frank Furness. The Guaranty Safe Deposit and Trust Co. Building. Photo. Rowe, USNPS.

(fig. 29).⁴³ As a result, the name of this Philadelphia architect,⁴⁴ which had fallen into almost total oblivion,

⁴² Peterson, Charles E., American notes: ante-bellum skyscraper, *Jour. Soc. Arch. Hist.*, 9 (3): 25, 27, 28, 1950.

⁴³ *Minutes of the proceedings of the Philadelphia chapter of the AIA* 1: 62-63, March 11, 1872 (American Institute of Architects, Philadelphia). Thomas U. Walter, who gave this information, completed the building. He may have designed the tower, which strongly resembles some of his drawings for other structures in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

⁴⁴ William Johnston (1811-1849) made the drawings for Phil-Ellena, the Greek revival mansion which George W. Carpenter erected in Germantown between 1841 and 1844 and was probably responsible, at least in part, for its design (George W. Carpenter, *Brief description of Phil-Ellena*, Phila., 1844). In 1845 he completed a building for the Mercantile Library [C, IV] at the southeast corner of Fifth and Library Streets (*Twenty-second annual report of the directors of the Mercantile Library*



FIG. 31. Frank Furness. The Provident Trust Co.
The Banking Room. Courtesy USNPS.

can be added to those of Holden and Cummings as an important innovator of the middle of the nineteenth century. These three buildings of theirs show clearly that beneath the reserved placidity of its brownstone façades Philadelphia was ready to experiment with new materials and new plans in an almost revolutionary fashion.

Great prestige in architecture is based not merely upon innovations in planning and new techniques of construction, important as these things are. Design, in the last analysis, is the controlling factor. This was proved by Frank Furness, Philadelphia's greatest architect of the late nineteenth century and one of the pioneers of the modern movement in America.⁴⁵ Returning from the Civil War to a practice which was to continue with great success until his death in 1912, Furness displayed the same courage in architecture that had won him the Medal of Honor in battle, for he defied the common tendency of his time to copy the building of the past. Like Henry Hobson Richardson, his brilliant contemporary, he tried to emphasize form and space and the intrinsic beauty of materials, which are the real ingredients of fine architecture. Furness also tried to revitalize architectural ornament by the use of boldly expressive naturalistic elements derived from the teaching of Ruskin. Often he was not entirely successful in what he attempted to do. At other times, however, as

Company of Philadelphia, 8, Phila., 1845). Johnston was also the author of the Bank of Commerce [E, IV] on Chestnut Street west of Second (Smith, R. A., *op. cit.*, 105). All three buildings have been destroyed.

⁴⁵ Campbell, William, Frank Furness; an American pioneer. *Architectural review* 110 (659) 312-315, 1951.

in the buildings of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts in 1872, the Guaranty Safe Deposit and Trust of 1875 (fig. 30) [D, IV] and most of all the Provident Trust Company of 1879 (fig. 31) [C, III], his style assumed a daring massiveness of form and an audacious breadth of space which are a true expression of force in architecture. Much of Furness's strength lies in his ornament, in those wonderfully designed flowers and leaves and that prodigious polychromy that undoubtedly influenced his one-time pupil Louis Sullivan. Much of his success derives also from the brilliant combinations of materials he used, like the terracotta, brick, and stone of the exterior of the library of the University of Pennsylvania (1891). These things recall Richardson at Sever Hall in Cambridge and Holy Trinity in Boston, but Furness developed them quite independently in his great period of the seventies before Richardson's style had fully matured. The presence of no less than a dozen great Furness buildings in our metropolitan area, surrounded as they are by other masterpieces of the nineteenth century, makes Philadelphia an unrivalled center for the study of the civil architecture of the period. By 1900 Furness's style had lost its early vigor and there was no one to carry on his tradition. Philadelphia then lost the leadership in architecture which it had held for so long and which it has not yet regained.

During this period of some two hundred years the builders of Philadelphia, like those of New York and Boston, had developed a local architecture from the modest beginnings of a vernacular style to the full-fledged academism of the late nineteenth century. In the first half of the eighteenth century the vernacular style of Philadelphia was probably the most faithful reproduction in the new world of the middle class domestic architecture of the English cities. Here it took on a specifically local flavor through the use of the pent-roof, patterned bricks and other features which distinguish it from that of New England and New York, as well as the colonial centers of the south. The markedly handsome and solid character of this early Philadelphia style then matured in the second half of the century into the richest American adaptation of British Georgian architecture. Philadelphia, abreast of the most creative centers in Federal times, excelled all other places in the neo-classic style. The great example of the Greek architects was here reflected in other revivals and complemented by the work of those experimenting with new forms, a tendency which culminated in the buildings of Frank Furness of the 1870's. That is the architectural heritage of Philadelphia, an illustrious tradition unsurpassed by any other city of this country and by few in the world at large.

MARKET HOUSES IN HIGH STREET

AGNES ADDISON GILCHRIST*

IN 1682, when Thomas Holme, the surveyor for William Penn, made the plan for Philadelphia, the proposed capital city for the newly granted colony of Pennsylvania, only the names of the axial streets were given: Broad Street and High Street, the latter running east and west from the Delaware River to the Schuylkill River. From the founding of the city, High Street was used for markets; at first outdoor markets and later market houses were built in the center of the street, until, by 1858 when the name was officially changed, eleven blocks of High Street had market houses. Nine market houses were to the east of Broad Street from Water to Eighth Street and two market houses to the west of Broad, from Fifteenth to Seventeenth Streets. In 1745 market houses were erected in South Second Street and later in Callowhill, Spring Garden, and other streets outside the original boundaries of Philadelphia. However, High Street remained the most important market area and early in common parlance was called Market Street as is shown by an advertisement of Samuel Grisley, a wine merchant, who stated that his store was in "High-Street commonly called Market Street" which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, June 8, 1758.¹ About a hundred years later, R. A. Smith in his guide to *Philadelphia as it is in 1852* commented upon confusion afforded the stranger in the city by having the main street legally of one name and commonly called by another name.

This confusion was abolished by the Ordinance passed September 1, 1858, when the name was legally changed to Market Street. However, an ironic anomaly came into being the next year with another ordinance which ordered the demolition of the market houses down the center of the street. In 1854, the Northern and Southern Liberties were incorporated into the city and with the new boundaries and increased size of the city; the increase of traffic and new methods of transportation; and above all with economics of marketing food changing from simple sale from producer to consumer to the more complex one of wholesaler and retailer, High

Street was no longer the effective marketing center of the city. That the name of the street was changed to Market Street, the year before the market houses were all demolished affords another example of the commemorative character of much legalization.²

The High Street markets had a good reputation. Both natives and visitors praised the abundance and high quality of the meat and produce sold in them. Benjamin Franklin, who lived just off High Street, wrote to Mrs. Mary Hewson on May 6, 1786, "... Considering our well-furnished, plentiful market as the best of gardens, I am turning mine, in the midst of which my house stands, into grass plots and gravel walks, with trees and flowering shrubs..." (A. H. Smyth, *Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, 11: 511, N. Y., Macmillan, 1906).

The first permanent market building to be erected in High Street was the arcaded ground floor of the Court House built in 1709 [E, II]. This building continued the mediaeval practice of combining the market and the Court. Architecturally, it echoed on a reduced scale the handsome market houses of England and Scotland, many of which are still standing such as at Shrewsbury and Ross. A more pretentious colonial market of the same type which has been preserved is The Brick Market in Newport, R. I., designed by Peter Harrison in 1761.³

² Other examples of commemorative legislation are the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, 1854 and the Infallibility of the Pope, 1870.

³ In the Stauffer Collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania there is an item entitled "FAC-SIMILE of the Original Plat of the Lots assigned to William and Laetitia Penn drawn 23rd of 12th month 1698, and recovered 4th of 9th month 1882 by W. F. Boogher. (Copyrighted.)" This shows the Bell Tower at Second and High with "The Cage" beside it and in the middle of High Street between Second and Front a rectangle 30 feet wide with the Prison at the west end 24 feet long, the Prison Yard 80 feet long and "A Plat designed for the Court House 46 feet." Mr. Peterson kindly sent me a photostat of this. Since I have neither seen the original nor know anything of the accuracy of W. F. Boogher, I cannot assess the value of the "FAC-SIMILE." There has been much confusion about the early history of the Court House, which has been dated 1698, perhaps partly because of this Plat and partly because of Gabriel Thomas, *Historical and Geographical Account of Pennsylvania*, 1698, who wrote of Philadelphia, p. 37, "Here is lately built a noble Town-House or Guild-Hall, also a Handsome Market House and a Convenient Prison." There may have been an early Court House near Front Street as shown on the Plat, but the *Colonial Records of Pennsylvania* do not mention it. Therefore, I begin with the well-documented Court House of 1709. It was the scene of many historic events, for example the death of Queen Anne, whose Coat of Arms was on the façade, and the accession of George I was announced from the balcony in 1714. In 1740 George Whitefield preached from the balcony and tradition says that his voice could be heard in Camden across the Delaware. The Court House was the seat of government both for the city and

*My special thanks are due Professor Louise Hall, Duke University, who found the Strickland letter among the Peale-Sellers Papers in the Library of the American Philosophical Society. Charles E. Peterson, Resident Architect, Edward Riley, Chief Park Historian, and Dennis C. Kurjack, Supervising Park Historian, all of the Independence National Historical Park Project gave information; also Walter Knight Sturges of the Avery Library, Columbia University. Miss Catharine Miller of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania; Barney Cheswick of the Ridgway Branch of Free Library of Philadelphia; Mrs. Ruth Duncan, American Philosophical Society Library; members of the staff of the New-York Historical Society and the New York Public Library at 42nd Street and the Free Library of Philadelphia all aided in the search for material and illustrations.

¹ *Penna. Mag. Hist. and Biog.* 13: 487, 1889.

The Court House ground floor arcaded market and the subsequent market houses of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries had brick piers for supports. The market houses built after 1834 had iron columns for supports. The first markets continue a type of construction which had long been in use in England and in the Low Countries.

The *Minutes of Common Council* for January 2, 1720, give in some detail this type of construction:

The Method of Building the Market Stalls being Often and Long Debated at this Board, Alderman Redman now proposes and Agrees to Build Thirty Stalls with all Expedition, after the Modell now exhibited and proposed with this Addition, Vizt. to carry the Brick pillars three foot higher, to Arch the Roof and plaister the same, Which Stalls he is to finish and find all materials According to an Estimacion now brought in by George Claypool and Thomas Redman. . . .

which estimate was for the

Sum of ffour hundred pounds to be paid in three several payments, Vizt. the Sum of two hundred pounds immediately, the Sum of One hundred pounds at Raising the Roof, the Sum of One hundred pounds more at the finishing thereof.

The conservative pattern of market house construction is illustrated by the Ordinance of February 11, 1822—For rebuilding the Jersey Market House [F, II], in High between Front and Second Streets, and for other purposes. In Section I, it states

. . . said Market house to commence within fifteen feet of the West line of said Front street, to continue along the middle of said High street, to within ten feet of the East line of said Second street.—The columns of said Market house shall not be less than eight feet high, and in no instance, regard being had to the necessary levels, more than ten feet high, the width or breadth of said Market house shall be the same as those already erected in High street.

This form of market house with gable house, brick supports, and plastered ceiling was in the European tradition begun in the late Middle Ages and found useful and acceptable until the nineteenth-century building practices felt the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the increased production of iron. This impact was felt at varying dates in different localities. The Councilmen of Philadelphia became aware of structural iron in the 1830's and so when there was a need for a new market in High Street west of Broad, the ordinance passed to authorize it, demanded the second type of construction, that with supports of structural iron.

Section II of the Ordinance of June 5, 1834, authorizing "a market house to be built and erected in High street, along the middle thereof, between Schuylkill

the colony until the State House, now known as Independence Hall, was completed in 1735. Both historically and architecturally, the Court House deserves a special study. Its affiliation with English Market houses and a comparison with other colonial markets would make a good topic of research in architectural history.

Eighth and Seventh streets," that is between Fifteenth and Sixteenth, reads as follows:

Sect. II. It shall be the duty of the city commissioners, under the direction of the committee on markets, to offer a premium of fifty dollars for such plan as may be approved and adopted by the said committee—provided, that the said market house shall be erected with iron columns.

The notice which was printed in the newspapers was even more explicit.

Premium

For a Plan of a Market House

City Commissioner's Office
Philadelphia, June 4, 1834

By an Ordinance of Councils, enacted June 5th 1834, it is made the duty of the City Commissioners under the direction of the Committee on Markets, to offer a Premium of Fifty Dollars, for such plan as may be approved by said Committee, provided the said Market House shall be erected with iron columns. It is contemplated to cover the roof of said Market House with metal and consequently it may be of a low pitch.

The Market House will be 336 feet in length including the Porticoes, and it is to be placed in the middle of High street, between Schuylkill Seventh and Eighth streets.

Drawings and descriptions of a Market House will be received at this office until Saturday, July 5, next ensuing.

By the Board

A. Traquair, President

There were a number of men in Philadelphia at that time who were practicing architects. Nine of them competed two years before in the competition for the Girard College buildings, by name: William Strickland, Thomas U. Walter, W. Rodrique, John Haviland, George Strickland, William B. Crisp, R. W. Israel, Y. J. Stewart, and Mr. Jenks of Germantown. Another Philadelphia architect was Isaac Holden who built the Tobacco Warehouse at Dock and Walnut. How many of these architects made plans for the Market House is not known, but the description and estimate offered by William Strickland is preserved in the Peale-Sellers Papers in the Library of the American Philosophical Society and is now published for the first time.

Philadelphia July 4th 1834

To the Committee on Markets,

Gentlemen,

The accompanying design of a Market house which is intended to be entirely composed of cast and wrought iron is submitted to your notice with a view of introducing into our city this novel mode of building;—There is perhaps no better object of Architecture than a Market house for an iron construction, and no better site than the centre of Market Street to exhibit its delicate but strong and durable properties.

The design contains all the necessary diagrams and notes which are calculated to explain the simplicity and convenience of the plan for the purposes of a Market house, where cleanliness and the greatest possible space for the exposure and sale of provisions is to be had in a much superior degree to any other material or mode of structure.

I have accompanied the plans with an estimate of the cost of the superstructure, omitting the curbing and brick paving, in order that you may judge of the expense of such

a building compared with the present Market houses with wooden shambles, and brick piers.

Estimate

52 Cast Iron columns each 8 in. in diameter and 10 ft. in length	\$1872.--
48 Cast iron Shambles, made in four sections—diam. 6 ft. the brackets or supports included	\$3552.--
768 Cranes & hooks suited to each Column & Shamble	\$1440.
50 Rail iron ties from Column to Column longitudinally	\$ 520.
24 wrought iron rafters extending across the Market from Column to Column, each 28 ft. in length	\$1488.
Roof constructed with sections of Iron corrugated	\$3080.
680 ft. of Cast Iron gutter	\$1700.
	<hr/>
	\$13,652.

respectfully submitted
by Your Obdt. servt.

William Strickland

To/

Messrs Yarnall
Warner
Darragh
Jackson
W. Credy &
Eyre

Committee on
Markets

P.S. If the shambles be made of wood, as they now are, instead of Cast iron as drawn in the plan, the whole cost will be diminished at least \$3000.

It is probable that the City Commissioners decided to save the \$3,000 and have the shambles of wood, for there is no further reference to cast iron shambles. The market house with cast iron columns and metal roof was built and before it was completed there were petitions for another market house west of Broad Street.

The Ordinance of October 1, 1835, provided that a market house should be built on High Street between Schuylkill Seventh and Sixth (that is between Sixteenth and Seventeenth as the streets were renamed in 1839). The first market house with iron columns was so satisfactory that the second western market was ordered to be built with iron columns also and of the same height and with the roof of the same elevation and projection.

One of the events of 1834 which affected the markets in High Street was the opening of the Columbia-Philadelphia Railroad which was part of the Canal and Railway System which connected Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. One track was completed in April and the second track was ready for use on October 6, 1834. There were daily trips each way with locomotive power and the cost was \$3.00. The terminal was without the city limits at Broad and Columbia, so soon there was agitation for the railroad to be brought into the city limits. In December 1835 a Memorial was presented to the City Commissioners by the Philadelphia Board of Trade requesting that a railroad might be constructed from the terminal in Broad Street east on High Street

to Third, then south on Third to Dock by the new Exchange and east on Walnut to the Drawbridge. "In conclusion, your memorialists take it for granted, that no locomotive will be permitted to enter the chartered limits of the city." The power on the railroad was to be "horses at a moderate rate of going." Until about 1850, the term railroad meant only what it said: a road with rails. It did not imply locomotive power as the term does now.

The need for continuing the railroad to the Delaware was so evident that an Ordinance was passed on December 24, 1835, for the building of the railroad and for new market houses from Third to Eighth Streets along High Street.

By February 11, 1836, the Committee on City Property was able to report that all was set to begin work in the spring on the railroad and the rebuilding of the market houses and that it had

appointed William Strickland, as Architect, he having been selected as Engineer on the Rail Road; they also adopted a plan for a neat Market House, having the full width of those now in existence, without eave stands, and without the cumbrous and unsightly appearance that is now presented; together with the requisite inquiries in the contracts for iron columns, and the mechanical work necessary for their completion.

Your Committee could not but feel a regret that any delay should be experienced, to a prompt removal of the present unsightly Houses, and of substituting new ones, possessing architectural beauty, with equal conveniences in their stead; but they could not reasonably refuse the recommendations of their intelligent Architect.

The architect, so flatteringly referred to, William Strickland, had recommended that the market houses remain standing until the railroad was laid. As part of the modernization of High Street in 1836, it was determined to demolish the first permanent building erected in High Street between 1708 and 1710, the old Court House which had stood west of Second Street which had served as the State House until 1735 when the new State House, now called Independence Hall, was ready for occupancy. There was some opposition to the removal of such a landmark. John Fanning Watson lamented that there was not much more. However, the progressive Commissioners carried the day and on September 1, 1836, an ordinance was passed for the "doing away with the Court House." It was demolished in March and April 1837.

There was some delay in obtaining sufficient cast iron columns for the construction of the market houses, but they were completed and generally admired as the following contemporary comments show. J. C. Wild, in his *Views of Philadelphia*, noted in 1838 that "The Markets excepting 'The Jersey' were removed last year, and light, airy, convenient and modernized ones were erected in their places." *A Guide to the Lions of Philadelphia*, 1837, commented on the markets that "The old buildings have been recently taken down, and new and more elegant ones erected on their sites." By the end

of the 1830's in Philadelphia a new aesthetic, based upon an admiration for structural iron, was being formed.

Judging from Strickland's letter no building constructed entirely of iron had been erected in Philadelphia before 1834, but structural iron had been used at least a dozen years previously by Strickland himself in the rebuilding of the Chestnut Street Theatre which was completed in 1822. It was described as having cast iron columns secured with iron sockets from the foundation to the dome. Strickland also used iron columns for the supports of the piazzas on the wings of the United States Naval Home (1827-1829). John Haviland used structural iron in the rebuilding of the Walnut Street Theatre in 1828 in the same way that Strickland had used it in the Chestnut Street Theatre, for it was "supported in each story by Iron Columns that extend from the pit to the roof." Haviland used iron in the construction of the Eastern State Penitentiary. The records of Hopewell Furnace, Berks County, show that "in 1825-26, Hopewell supplied much of the cast-iron installations used in the cell blocks. . . ."⁴

These were notable buildings in Philadelphia and this use of structural iron must have been known by all the members of the City Councils. Probably they also knew of the increasing use of cast iron supports for market houses in England and on the Continent such as the Marché de la Madeleine at Veugny in 1824.

John Haviland in the first volume of his *The Builders Assistant* published in Philadelphia in 1819 under his discussion of building materials wrote the following about iron:

Iron has been applied to many purposes unthought of in former times. The improvement and general introduction of cast iron bids fair to create a totally new school of architecture. It has already been occasionally employed in bridges, pillars, roofs, floors, chimneys, doors, and windows, and the facility with which it is moulded into different shapes will continue to extend its application.

In the 1830's Haviland gave substance to his prophetic statement that cast iron would "create a totally new school of architecture." His innovation is best described in his own words, taken from his improved and enlarged edition of *Biddle's The Young Carpenter's Assistant*, Philadelphia, 1837.

A Bank has recently been executed by Mr. John Haviland, Architect, of Philadelphia, the author of this work, at Pottsville, Schuylkill co. Pa. and every feature of the front (not excepting the moulded cornices) are formed of cast iron, in imitation of marble; and it is believed to be the first and only example of this material being employed in the whole *façade*. The iron plates are cast in lengths and form corresponding with the size and jointing of the stone-work, backed in with masonry two feet thick, and secured to the same by wrought iron ties, two and three to each plate; when finished, the whole was well painted and sanded with white sand, which gave the surface a very beautiful and uniform texture of stone, free from gloss, and at the same time prevented its rusting.

⁴Kurjack, Dennis C., *Hopewell Village*, Washington, National Park Service Historical Handbook Series No. 8, 1950.



FIG. 1. Coat of Arms of Queen Anne from Court House (1709). Pen and ink sketch frontispiece of volume XXX, Stauffer Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

It is very much to be regretted that this valuable material is not more frequently used, as a substitute for the more perishable ones of wood, and expensive one of marble, or cut free-stone. Iron is not only more fire-proof, durable, and stronger, than wood, but also more economical and favorable to embellishment, than marble or cut free-stone. When duplicates are required, the labor of carved or moulded work in one pattern, answers for all.

The enthusiasm of these architects, both of whom were well informed of the English advances in the diversified uses of structural iron, Haviland by being an Englishman by birth and beginning his architectural career under James Elmes and Strickland having investigated the manufacture of iron in England in 1825 for the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Internal Improvements, must have influenced Philadelphians to take an interest in iron as a building material.

In Pennsylvania there were both coal and iron deposits and in Philadelphia itself there were foundries.

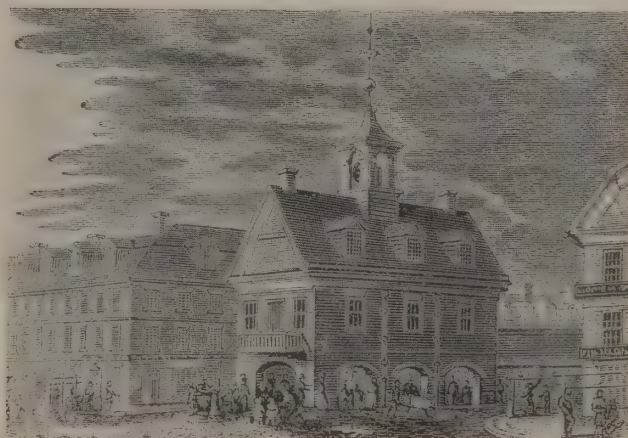


FIG. 2. Woodcut of the Old Court House from *The Casket*, June 1828. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.



FIG. 3. Market Hall, Amersham, Buckinghamshire, England. Built in 1682 by Sir William Drake. The Philadelphia Market and Court House of 1709 was similar in design: arcaded ground floor with hall above; and in construction: brick with stone dressings. Courtesy of The National Buildings Record, London.

The I. P. Morris Company was founded in 1828. The Mars Works of Oliver Evans had two furnaces capable of melting five tons of iron. The Eagle Works of S. and W. Richards on the Schuylkill advertised casting, as did the City Iron Foundry. Among the first members of the Franklin Institute in 1824, James J. Rush and James Somerville are listed as Iron Founders and James Roland as an Iron Master.



FIG. 4. High Street Market looking west from Jersey Market, showing balcony of Court House and vista through market house to Fourth Street. Engraving by Thomas Birch, 1799. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

There must have been much experimentation with iron to convince the members of City Councils that the new market house should have cast iron columns and a metal roof. Perhaps they knew that Charles Bonnycastle of Charlottesville, Virginia, had obtained a patent on June 29, 1833, for a method of covering roofs with sheet iron.

An advertisement which appeared in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, Saturday, July 19, 1834, shows how many metals were available for roofing at that time.

Roofing—1000 sheets Copper, suitable thickness for roofs.
1000 sheets Zinc, very superior for roofs.
Leaded Plate, of Truman's make, for roofs
Sheet Iron, prepared to order for roofs
Sheet Tin, best quality for roofs

A constant supply of the above for sale by

N. Trotter & Co.
36 north Front street



FIG. 5. The New Jersey Market of 1822 at Second Street. Lithograph by J. C. Wild, 1838. Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

CONCLUSION

Market houses are purely utilitarian sheds and yet they reflect the architectural practices most clearly. In High Street in Philadelphia, the first permanent market was the arcaded ground floor of the Court House at Second Street. It faced east and had a balcony from which proclamations were made. It was built in the reign of Queen Anne and her coat of arms were carved in its façade (fig. 1) and it continued the mediaeval custom of combining courts and markets (figs. 2, 3).

The three subsequent market houses of the eighteenth century were also mediaeval in form and construction, that is simple gable-roofed sheds with brick piers and plastered ceilings. These were the market house which continued westward of the Court House in 1720 and the Jersey Market between Second and Front and the market between Third and Fourth built after the Act of March 23, 1786 (fig. 4).

The six market houses built in the first quarter of

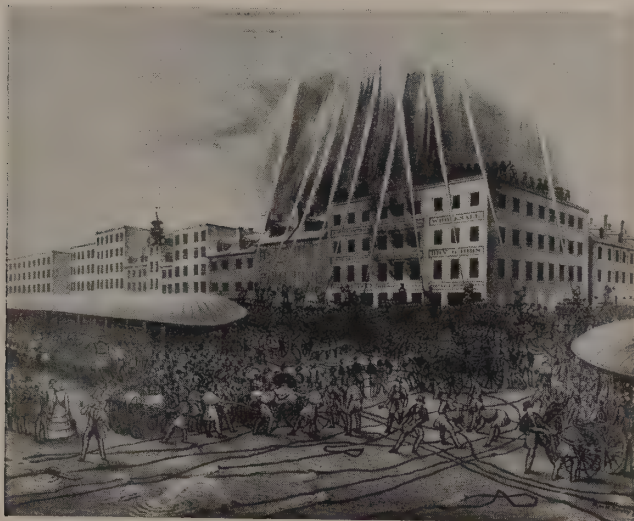


FIG. 6. A demonstration by the Fire Companies at Fifth and Market showing the metal Market Houses of 1836-1837. Lithograph by Charles H. Spieler, 1882. (The accuracy of this lithograph made 23 years after the demolition of the Market houses has not yet been confirmed by a contemporary view of the metal markets.) Courtesy of Hist. Soc. of Penna.

the nineteenth century have more ornamentation and reflect in some slight measure the rebirth of homage to antiquity which stemmed from the Italian Renaissance. These traces of classicisms are not yet of Stuart and Revett Greek origin. The market houses to the west to Eighth Street had porticos supported by two round wood columns. The fish market of 1816 had a shad ornamenting its gable. The Jersey Market was rebuilt in 1822 and had a cupola at the Front Street end with cornucopias at either side of the gable spilling the abundance of Jersey produce (fig. 5).

The seven market houses built in the 1830's introduced structural iron construction on a large scale to Philadelphia and heralded a new aesthetic which prepared the way for technics and architectural design of the present century (fig. 6).

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF MARKET HOUSES WITH REFERENCES

1693

Bell Tower

Colonial Records of Pa. I: 388. August 9, 1693.

Agreed to have market where Second Street crosses High Street.

Resolved, that after the 12th instant, the market and stalls be for the present removed to market-hill, and be there kept until such time only, and no longer, as the Lt. Gov. shall cause the place where the second street crosses High-street, to be staked out for the market place, and till a Bell-house be built and erected, and the bell hung in the sd place, and that notice yrof be given to all persons concerned, by the Clark of the market.

The Bell tower was evidently built before Oct. 1, 1693 when the Regulation of the Market was given. *op. cit.* I: 391

1709

Court House with Market on ground floor

Minutes of the Common Council 1704-1776, Phila., 1847 p. 52. Common Council 30 March 1708 to pass a law for building a Court House.

p. 58. Nov. 22, 1708, The Mayor and Joshua Carpenter are requested to consider what length and Extent may be proper for the building of the new Market House. And how much money may be required to finish the same.

p. 64. The building of the new Market House being thought by this Council to be of great service to the Town and Beneficial to the Corporation, 'twas put the rate how money should be raised for the doing thereof And it was voted that seven Aldermen shall contribute and pay double what the Common Councilmen should do.

p. 74. May 11, 1711, Ordered that a Shop may be Built under the Court House Stairs, to be Lett out to the best advantage.

Caspipina's Letters by a Gentleman who resides in Philadelphia [Jacob Duché], Bath, 1777. I: 8 (Description of High Street, 1771)

The principal street, which is an hundred feet wide, would have a noble appearance, were it not for an ill-conditioned court-house, and a long range of shambles, which they have stuck in the very middle of it.

The Casket, June 1828, p. 253. A view of the Court House and an article on it based on J. F. Watson's manuscript.

This once venerable building, long diverted of its original honours, had long been regarded by us and others, as a rude and undistinguished edifice. . . . Fully therefore, we entered into his feelings [J. F. Watson's] of gratification, at seeing its exterior lately refitted and repaired in a manner calculated to add to its future antiquity and veneration by its longer preservation and continuance.

This structure, diminutive and ignoble as it may now appear to our modern conception, was the *chef d'oeuvre* and largest endeavor of our Pilgrim Fathers.

The article continues that Watson has the manuscript papers concerning its building, that it cost £616 and Samuel Powel was the carpenter, that it had windows with leaden panes and a balcony in front with steps formerly on either side leading up to it.

Probably the engraving of the "Paxton Boys" 1764 which shows the Court House with such steps was a source for this tradition. Certainly by 1799 when William Birch made his engraving of the Markets and Court House, there was only the balcony as is seen again in Strickland's painting of Christ Church and Second Street (now in the H. S. P.) and in the woodcut in *The Casket* of 1828, and the oil painting by Russell Smith, of 1835 also in the H. S. P. The illustration in Watson's *Annals of Philadelphia*, 1898, p. 350, is an engraving of the pencil drawing by Edward William Mumford now in the Ridgway Branch of the Philadelphia Free Library, which is a reconstruction of Second and High when a Meeting House was at the corner.

Journal of Common Councils 1835-1836, p. 204. On August 11, 1836 a resolution was introduced for the removal of the old Court House and the Market Houses. On September 1, 1836, an ordinance was passed "for the doing away with the Court House" which was accomplished in March and April 1837.

1720

Minutes of Common Council 1704-1776, p. 187, January 2, 1720.

A "Modell" of the Market with thirty stalls to be built west of the Court House was approved and the estimate of 400 brought in by George Claypool and Thomas Redman. On August 29, 1720, p. 180, it was determined that "Some fit person skilled in Building to oversee yedd Work" be appointed and George Claypoole was chosen, p. 184. By May 28, 1753, the roofs of the Western markets were out of repair, p. 566. Demolished 1837.

1759

The Markets were continued to Third Street. *op. cit.*, p. 644. Demolished 1837.

Only the one block of markets was built before the Revolution as is shown by the Map of Wm. Faden, Jan. 1, 1779

1786

The Municipal Law of Philadelphia—1701-1887, compiled by Charles B. McMichael, Philadelphia 1887. p. 113.

Act to empower wardens to extend market House in High Street from Third to Fourth street and continue westerly from time to time. Demolished 1836.

1789

Constitution and Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia, Hall and Sellers, Phila, 1790.

June 8, 1789. An Ordinance for the Regulation of the Market held in High-street in the city of Philadelphia, on the 4th and 7th days of the week, called Wednesdays and Saturdays.

By then the Jersey shambles were built with engine houses at the west end. Demolished 1822.

By the end of the eighteenth century there were three blocks of market houses as shown in Birch's engraving of 1799 and the map of 1794 dedicated to Thomas Mifflin, Governor of Pennsylvania, drawn by A. P. Folie and engraved by R. Scot and S. Allardice, that is from Front to Fourth streets.

1810

Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia by John C. Lowber, Philadelphia, 1812. p. 118. March 19, 1810. Additional Supplement to the of March 23, 1786 for building Market Houses "from time to time westerly from one street to another, in the middle of High-street."

Mease, James, *Philadelphia in 1811*, Phila. 1811. pp. 116-122. Markets from Fourth to Sixth streets in 1810.

The increased projection of the eaves over the pillars in the last part, is a great improvement as it increases accommodation and protection to the country people, and admits of a more advantageous display of their various productions.

In the new parts, the upright posts and cross pieces having hooks to suspend the provisions on, are required to be regularly taken down after market hours, and packed away under the stalls: a very proper regulation and strictly enforced.

The pillars of all the markets are of brick, and openings are left at proper distances to admit a passage between them. The footpaths are paved with the same material. Their breadth in the clear is about thirteen feet.

Map of the City of Philadelphia. Actual Survey by John A. Paxton, W. Harrison Sc't. drawn under the direction of J. A. Paxton by Wm. Strickland. Jan. 1, 1811. This map shows Market Houses from Front to Sixth Street. Demolished 1837.

1815

Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia: passed since 18 day June, 1812-1815. Chap. 198: An ordinance for building a fish market in High Street east of Water Street, passed March 23, 1815.

Wilson, *Picture of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia 1823, p. 69. The Fish Market. Water Street and Wharves. A new market house built 50 ft. in Market Street from east of Water running 150 ft. to river Delaware. Its center is 18 ft. including brick piers; its eaves project 7 ft. on each side, supported by turned columns, and of its kind, is an ornament to the city. It is well stored with the finny tribe, such as resort to its contiguous waters.

Map of Philadelphia of 1819 dedicated to Wm. Sansom shows markets to Sixth and the Fish Market at Water. Demolished 1859.

1821

Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia: passed since the 3rd Day of August 1820. Lydia Bailey, Phila. 1822. Passed March 29, 1821—An Ordinance for extending the Market House in High street from Sixth to Eighth streets. Which provided "that the said market houses shall be finished in the same manner, and corresponding with the market houses erected between Fourth and Sixth Streets."

An amendment to this Ordinance was passed May 3, 1821 directing that the market houses between Sixth and Eighth Street be built with "a plain and neat portico of the Doric order in conformity to a plan exhibited to Councils." Also that it include four more stalls by narrowing the passages and shortening the shambles. Demolished 1836.

1822

National Gazette and Literary Register, February 11, 1822 An Ordinance enacted 6 day February 1822

For re-building the Jersey Market House, in High between Front and Second streets, and for other purposes.

SECT. I Be it ordained and enacted, by the citizens of Philadelphia in Select and Common Councils assembled, That the City Commissioners be, and they are hereby authorised and required to rebuild or cause to be re-built, as soon as convenient after the passing of this ordinance, the Jersey Market House, in High Street, between Front and Second streets; and previously thereto to cause the said High street to be regulated so as to make its ascent from the river more easy, and also to cause the said street between the West side of Second and the East side of Water street, to be re-paved:—said Market house to commence within fifteen feet of the West line of said Front street, to continue along the middle of said High street, to within ten feet of the East line of said Second street.—The column of said Market house shall not be less than eight feet high, and in no instance, regard being had to the necessary levels, more than ten feet high, the width or breadth of said Market house shall be the same as those already erected in High street, and the said Market house shall be finished in the same manner, and corresponding with the Market houses erected in said High street, between Sixth and Eighth streets, except the East end, which shall be finished in conformity to a plan now exhibited to

Councils, to be certified by the Clerks of Council, and deposited in the Commissioners' office.

Wilson, *Picture of Philadelphia*, Philadelphia, 1823, p. 70
Jersey Market

On the east end is erected a fanciful cupola or rotunda, raised on doric columns, or pillars, in which is placed a clock with two dials, one on the east and the other on the west. The front on High street presents itself supported on each side by Ceres with her cornucopia or horn of plenty, having a most pleasing effect, and adds greatly to the beauty of the market house.

Map of Philadelphia—J. Drayton, 1824, shows markets to Eighth Street (also gives the designs of the paths in the public squares).

Demolished 1859.

1834

A Digest of the Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia and the Acts of Assembly relating thereto. Philadelphia, 1841, p. 216. Ordinance of June 5, 1834

57. sect. I. The city commissioners, under the direction of the committee on markets, are hereby authorized and required, to cause and procure, as soon as possible after the passage of this ordinance, a market house to be built and erected in High street, along the middle thereof, between Schuylkill Eighth and Seventh streets, beginning thirty feet west of the west line of said Schuylkill Eighth street, and extending westward to within thirty feet of the east line of Schuylkill Seventh street.

Sect. II. It shall be the duty of the city commissioners, under the direction of the committee on markets, to offer a premium of fifty dollars for such plan as may be approved and adopted by the said committee—provided, that the said market house shall be erected with iron columns.

Poulson's American Daily Advertiser, vol. LXIII, Friday, June 27, 1834, p. 1, column 6. Notice of the Premium to be offered for a plan for the market having iron columns and a metal roof. Full text appears in this article.
National Gazette, Saturday, April 4, 1835.

City Commissioners Office

Victuallers, Farmers and Gardeners. Stands and Stalls in New Market. Applications April 1835. Date of auction to be set.
Ad. Traquair, Pres.

Demolished 1859

1835

A Digest of the Ordinances of the Corporation of the City of Philadelphia and the Acts of Assembly relating thereto. Philadelphia, 1841 October 1, 1835

An ordinance to construct a market house on High street between Schuylkill Seventh and Sixth. With iron columns and of the same width and design as the market already built west of Broad Street.

Journal of Common Councils 1835/36, p. 80

Budget for new market house \$5,000.00

\$4000.00 for 1836

p. 246. The new market house in High street between Schuylkill Seventh and Sixth streets will be shortly ready for occupancy and your committee would recommend that early measures be adopted for renting stalls.

Demolished 1859.

1835

Ordinances of the City of Philadelphia, 1834-1854, Philadelphia 1854, p. 520, chap. 559. December 24, 1835
An ordinance to construct a Branch of the Philadelphia and Columbia Rail Road from Broad Street to the River Delaware, and for the building of certain Market Houses.

Sect. I. Route of R.R from Broad along Market to Third along which to Dock along which to Walnut and so past Tobacco Warehouse to Delaware at Drawbridge Dock. R.R to be built with stone sills and iron rails.

Sect. III. Three miles an hour and no cars on Market days.

Sect. IV. New Market houses Delaware Third to Eighth.

Sect. VI. Appropriations of \$40,000 for Committee on Highways to build rail road and \$40,000 for Committee on City Property to build market houses.

Sect. V. And be it further ordained and enacted by the authority aforesaid, That it shall be the duty of the said committee to have the roof of the proposed market houses supported on iron columns, the width of the said houses not to exceed nineteen feet, the stalls to be erected in such manner and form as in the opinion of said committee will best adapt the same to public convenience and usefulness.

Journal of Common Council, Philadelphia 1835/36. p. 107
Part of a letter from William Strickland to Richard Price, Chairman of the Committee on City Property, dated February 4, 1836. I regret, as much as any citizen, the present unsightly appearance of the Houses in High street, and would wish them removed on that account, independently of their obstruction to the Railway, but my principle object in addressing you on this subject is for you to consider the propriety of permitting the *present buildings to remain until the Railway is finished*, and when that is done I am confident that there will be much less remorse in parting with the old buildings *altogether*, or, in the erection of new ones in their stead.

Strickland also promised that the rail would be laid by the first of July 1836.

p. 134. The Committee on Public Property reported Strickland's desire for a delay and agreed to it. It also announced that William Strickland had been appointed architect of the markets since he was already acting as engineer of the Rail Road.

p. 147. The Committee reported that the market houses would be built as soon as iron columns could be procured. The cost for each block of market house was to be not over \$6,000.

Demolished 1859.

1836

Journal of Common Council of Philadelphia 1835/36

p. 204. August 11, 1836, there was a discussion of the removal of the old Court House and it was ordered that a new Market should be built by Feb. 1, 1837.

The Ordinance for doing away with the Court House was passed September 1, 1836.

pp. 214-215 Ordinances relating to Market Houses provided that a cupola be built on the west end of the market house between Second and Third streets with a "publick" clock with two dials, one facing east and one facing west.

This ordinance was repealed June 22, 1837.

1859

Journal of Select Council of Philadelphia Nov. 11, 1858–
May 5, 1859

Act of Assembly—4 February A. D. 1859

Section I. The Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia do ordain, That the Commissioner of Markets is hereby directed and required forthwith to contract with any party offering to remove the market buildings in Market street west of Broad street, at an expense to the city not exceeding one dollar for the taking down and removal of said buildings, which amount is hereby appropriated for that purpose: Provided, That the materials of every description be removed under the direction of the Commissioner of Markets to such places as he may designate.

April 14, 1859

An ordinance to authorize the Commissioner of Markets to take down and remove certain Market houses on Market street, and to sell certain materials and to rent stalls to 1 October 1859

p. 613 Appendix No. 186

An Ordinance

To provide for the expense of removing the market sheds from Market Street

Select and Common Councils appropriated \$2000. for the removal of Market sheds East of Eighth Street, provided that not more than \$300. be expended for the removal of any one square of said Market sheds.

THE THEATRE AND THE DRAMA IN OLD PHILADELPHIA

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WHILE there had been sporadic attempts at theatrical productions in the Southern Colonies as early as 1712, the first company of which we have any accurate knowledge began its career in Philadelphia. Under the leadership of Thomas Kean and Walter Murray, they produced plays at a warehouse, belonging to William Plumsted, on Water Street below Pine Street [G, VI]. They began their season in January 1749, and notwithstanding the protest of the Recorder to the Common Council of the City, they continued until February 1750, when they departed for New York. We know of these early efforts usually from the protests lodged by the Quaker, Baptist, and Methodist elements, and it was due to the more liberal attitude of Plumsted, who was Mayor of the City and a Trustee of the College of Philadelphia, that they were permitted to act. They performed Addison's *Cato* on August 22,¹ and while the record of their plays is not available, it may be assumed that it was the same as that given in New York, which included twenty-four plays, among them *Richard III*, Dryden's *Spanish Friar*, and Congreve's *Love for Love*.

Interesting as the speculations concerning this troupe are, it is with the coming of the company headed by Lewis Hallam in 1752 that our theatrical history begins.

After playing in Williamsburg and New York, Hallam came to Philadelphia, against vigorous opposition on the part of the Quakers. His efforts, however, found support by Governor Hamilton and he opened in Plumsted's warehouse, on April 15, 1754, with Rowe's *Fair Penitent* and Garrick's *Miss in Her Teens*. Although the record in Philadelphia is not complete, Hallam's repertory of thirty-seven plays included *King Lear*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Richard III*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*, Marlowe's *Tamerslane*, Lillo's *George Barnwell*, and a number of comedies by Farquhar, Addison, Cibber, Steele, Garrick, and Fielding.

The season had been limited by the Governor to thirty performances, so the company left Philadelphia. The minutes of the Board of Trustees of the College of Philadelphia for August 13, 1754, reveal the fact that a benefit had been performed for the Charity School connected with the College, and a hundred pounds had been raised, which, after some discussion, had been accepted. Since the production took place on June 19, the Trustees had taken their own good time in accepting the money!

In Jamaica, Lewis Hallam died and his widow, having married David Douglass, returned as leading woman in 1758, with Lewis Hallam, Jr., eighteen years old, as leading man.

¹ See Manuscript Journal of John Smith, son-in-law of James Logan, agent for William Penn.

In Philadelphia, Douglass secured permission of Governor Denny to play in the colony, and he avoided conflict with the authorities of the city by building a theatre on the south side of Cedar, afterwards South Street, at the Corner of Vernon, later South Hancock Street. The building was used for only one season, and three houses were later erected on the site.² The enemies of the theatre were powerful enough to persuade the General Assembly to limit the season, which lasted only from June 25 to December 28, 1759. Douglass built a number of theatres in other cities which formed the circuit of the "American Company," but they were generally transitory affairs and the first permanent theatre was erected by him in 1766 on South Street, above Fourth Street, and was called the Southwark Theatre. It was a rough brick and wood structure, painted red. The stage was lighted by oil lamps, without glasses, and the view was interrupted by the pillars that supported the upper tier and the roof. Yet it remained in use for theatrical productions until the early nineteenth century, and while it was partly destroyed by fire in 1821, it was rebuilt and was used for many years as a distillery. It was demolished in 1912. This season lasted from November 12, 1766, until July 6, 1767. It was noteworthy for the production, on April 24, of Thomas Godfrey's *The Prince of Parthia*, the first play, written by an

² The proprietor of the corner house has an ingenious theory, that since the wall dividing the rooms is much thicker than the outside wall, it must be the old proscenium wall of the theatre. If so, it is the oldest surviving fragment of a theatre in the United States.



FIG. 1. The Southwark Theatre, the first permanent theatre in the United States, 1766-1813. From A. Hornblow, *A History of the Theatre in America* 1: 95, Phila., Lippincott, 1919. Courtesy of Univ. of Penna. Library.

American, to be produced upon an American stage by a professional company. The advertisement, which appeared in the *Pennsylvania Journal and the Weekly Advertiser*, April 23, runs as follows:

BY AUTHORITY

Never Performed Before

By the American Company,

At the NEW THEATRE, in *Southwark*,

On Friday, the Twenty-Fourth of April,

will be presented, A Tragedy

written by the late ingenious

Mr. *Thomas Godfrey*, of this city, called the

PRINCE of PARTHIA

The Principal Characters by Mr. HALLAM,

Mr. WALL, Mr. MORRIS, . . . Mrs. DOUGLASS,

Mrs. MORRIS, etc.

To begin exactly at *Seven o'clock*. *Vivant Rex and Regina*.

It was not usual to print any criticism of a play, and it seems not to have been produced again until the Zelosophic Society, of the University of Pennsylvania, performed it on March 26, 1915. It proved to be an actable play, notwithstanding the regulation of the Trustees that women's parts still had to be taken by men!

Godfrey did not live to see his play on the stage, or in print, as it was published in 1765. Born in 1736, the son of Thomas Godfrey, the inventor of the sea quadrant, who died when his son was thirteen years old, he was apprenticed to a watchmaker, but was released through the efforts of Provost William Smith of the College of Philadelphia, and became a pupil of the Provost. Smith introduced him to others of his pupils, Francis Hopkinson, the first poet-composer, and Benjamin West, the first native painter, both in 1768 to become members of the American Philosophical Society. These three boys formed a friendship whose stimulation by a great teacher resulted in the birth of the three arts of painting, music, and drama in this country. Godfrey died in 1763 of a fever, but West and Hopkinson proceeded in their artistic careers and the latter designed both the seal of the American Philosophical Society and the flag of the United States. Hopkinson had been one of the active participants in the first of the College dramatic exercises, forerunner of many thousands, the *Masque of Alfred*, by Thompson and Mallet, with music by Arne, which dealt with the rescue of England from the Danes. This masque, produced in the Old College Hall, in the Christmas holidays of 1756-1757, was partially rewritten by Dr. Smith, and it seems certain that Godfrey must have shared with his friend in its production although no complete list of participants has survived. In any event it helped to inspire him to write *The Prince of Parthia*, a romantic tragedy laid in Parthia about the beginning of the Christian era. It shows the influence of Shakespeare, of Dryden, of Beau-



FIG. 2. The First Chestnut Street Theatre, "Old Drury" opened February 17, 1794, burned April 2, 1820.

mont, and of Ambrose Philips, but the plot is Godfrey's. The love of Arsaces, the eldest son of the King Artabanus, for Evanthe, a captive maiden, proceeds to inevitable tragedy, for they have against them not only the desire of the King for Evanthe, but also the hatred of the Queen for Arsaces, who has killed her own son, and the jealousy of Vardanes, the second son of the King. These characters come to life on the stage and their emotions were clothed by Godfrey in a flexible and at times distinguished blank verse. Moreover he had selected the fundamental passions of love, jealousy, hatred, and revenge and the sentiments of loyalty, pity, and terror, for his framework. It was not a closet play. He had written it definitely for the American Company and only the shortened season had prevented *The Prince of Parthia* from being produced in 1759.

Douglass made moderately successful efforts to play in Philadelphia in 1768 and 1769. After trying New York and other places, he re-opened the Southwark Theatre on October 28, 1772, and had his most successful season, running until March 31, 1773. *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Richard III*, *Cymbeline*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Henry IV*, *Othello*, *The Tempest*, and *The Merchant of Venice* were performed, a record surpassing the number of Shakespearean performances in one season today. Douglass was making plans for still greater success when the approach of war put an end to the theatre for a time. Congress passed a resolution, October 20, 1774, to "encourage frugality" and "discourage every species of extravagance and dissipation, especially of horse racing . . . gaming, exhibitions of shews, plays and other expensive diversions and entertainments." It is interesting that the main opposition rested upon the cost of the theatre, just as it does today. Douglass took his company to the West Indies, and the first period of the American drama and theatre was over.

Congress had no power to enforce its decree, but it was generally reenforced by State action. The drama became a vehicle for Whig or Tory propaganda, published usually anonymously. One of the most elaborate of these dramas, which has been attributed to John or Joseph Leacock, of Philadelphia, of whom little is known, was *The Fall of British Tyranny, or, American Liberty Triumphant*. The author realized, as Bancroft and Trevelyan have since established, that the Revolution began in the contests in the British Parliament for office. The scene shifts rapidly from London to Boston, to Lexington, to Virginia, to Montreal, and finally to Cambridge, where Washington appears, probably for the first time in our drama.

event, a performance of *Cato* was again given at Valley Forge, and the republican tone of the play made it an appropriate choice on the part of the American soldiers.

Even after the Revolution, the American Company had to fight hard for a resumption of its activities. In 1784 Lewis Hallam petitioned without success for a repeal of the prohibitory act of the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1778 and had to be satisfied with permission to deliver in the Southwark Theatre a *Monody to the Memory of the Chiefs who had fallen in the Cause of American Liberty*. The law was not repealed until 1789. Hallam gradually established a circuit for the American Company in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Annapolis.



FIG. 3. The Second Old Drury, opened December 2, 1822, on the site of the First Chestnut Street Theatre. From A. A. Gilchrist, *William Strickland, Architect and Engineer, 1788-1854*, Phila., Univ. of Penna. Press, 1950.

The British officers played, during their occupation of Philadelphia, in the Southwark Theatre, and Major André was the director of the Mischianza, the elaborate land and water spectacle, at Woodlands and upon the Delaware River, given as a farewell tribute to General Howe. Of more significance to us, the American officers relieved the tedium of the Camp at Valley Forge by productions of plays, in April and May, 1778. According to a letter from William Bradford, Jr., to his sister, Rachel, May 14, 1778: "The theatre is opened. Last Monday, [May 11], *Cato* was performed before a very numerous and splendid audience. His Excellency and Lady, . . . Lord Stirling, the Countess and Lady Kitty . . . were part of the Assembly." These festivities, which form a contrast to the privation of the winter, were given as part of the celebrations of the French alliance. On May 28, 1778, on the anniversary of this

It soon became evident that Philadelphia needed a new theatre. The American Company in New York had lost the services of its foremost low comedian, Thomas Wignell, who went to England to recruit a new company to fill his projected theatre on the north side of Chestnut Street, above Sixth Street [A, III]. This was begun in 1791 but, owing to the yellow fever epidemic of 1793, it did not open for a regular season until February 17, 1794. It was the most impressive building yet constructed for a theatre in the Colonies. Fortunately we have a detailed description given by a French traveller.³ The exterior dimensions were ninety by one hundred and thirty four feet, and the Corinthian columns of the front were flanked by two projecting

³ Saint-Méry, Moreau de, *Voyage aux États-Unis de l'Amérique, 1793-1798*, ed. by Stewart L. Mims, New Haven, Yale Univ. Press, 1913.



FIG. 4. The Walnut Street Theatre, built 1809, the oldest surviving theatre in the English speaking world.

wings. The three galleries held 765 persons and together with the parquet with thirteen rows, holding 400, housed a total audience of 1,165. Saint-Méry noted that the stage was lighted, as in France, with oil lamps which were raised and lowered for dark scenes, and which incidentally were responsible for the many fires in the theatres. Of real interest was the comment of the Frenchman that the interludes were more indecent than in the French theatres, and that the women in the audience turned their backs on the stage during these interludes.

The "New Theatre" soon housed a brilliant Company including Mrs. Whitlock, the sister of Mrs. Siddons, and Susannah Haswell Rowson, the author of *Charlotte Temple*, the famous tear-jerker of the day, whose play, *Slaves in Algiers*, was put on at the Chestnut in 1794, when feeling was running high against the pirates of the Mediterranean. The Theatre was the forum for political discussion, often so bitter that our present tirades in Congress seem mild by comparison. In 1798, the Chestnut was nightly the scene of noisy rivalry between the Federalists and the Democrats. It was here that the actor Joseph Fox sang for the first time "Hail Columbia!" for which Joseph Hopkinson, later vice-president of the American Philosophical Society, had written the words to the music of the "President's March." The occasion became noteworthy, for thousands tried, unsuccessfully, to obtain admission; the song was encored four times, and while it began as a Federalist demonstration, it caught the fancy of all in the audience and became entrenched as a national song. But not all the occasions at "Old Drury," as the Chestnut came to be called, had as happy an ending. Politics continued to run high and when James Nelson Barker, a leading Democrat, had his play *Tears and Smiles* (1807) produced, his Federalist enemies made such impertinent remarks from the stage boxes that the author drew his pistol and restored order. His reputation as dualist helped considerably in this effort to per-

mit the play to go on. Even more stirring was the production of Barker's *Marmion*, on January 1, 1813, when the war with England was on and Barker had gone to the Canadian border as Captain of the Second Artillery Regiment. In his dramatization of Scott's poem, Barker had given King James of Scotland some fine lines which referred to the contemporary situation in the United States, and when the climax came

My lord, my lord, under such injuries,
How shall a free and gallant nation act?

General Barker, the author's father, rose in his box and led the applause that rocked the theatre.

The Chestnut Street Theatre had a brilliant career. In only one season, 1797-1798, thirteen new pieces besides twenty revivals and an equal number of afterpieces were offered. But the splendid building, with all its contents, was destroyed by fire on April 3, 1820. On



FIG. 5. The Arch Street Theatre, third of the Philadelphia trinity, opening October 1, 1828.

December 2, 1822, it was reopened as the "New Theatre" and had a long career as "Old Drury."

In the interim the management of Warren and Wood had taken refuge in the Olympic Theatre, renamed as the Walnut Street Theatre, at the Northeast corner of Ninth and Walnut Streets. It had begun as a circus, but since 1811 had offered legitimate drama. While remodeled at various times, the structure still remains, and since every theatre built before it has been destroyed by fire it is now not only the oldest theatre in the United States, but probably the oldest in the English speaking world.⁴

The Arch Street Theatre, the last of the early theatres, was opened October 1, 1828⁵ by William Wood.

⁴ Mr. Allardyce Nicoll, the historian of the English theatres, is of this opinion.

⁵ Unfortunately, the site of this theatre is covered over on the Map by a reproduction of the first map of Philadelphia.

It stood on Arch Street, above Sixth Street. The front followed the usual pattern of pillars, ten feet in height, apparently supporting the second story. The theatre was seventy feet by one hundred and fifty-five feet. There were three tiers of boxes in the form of a horse-shoe, extending over the pit, and holding altogether about two thousand persons. The stage was one hundred and fifty-five feet in depth, and the structure was partly stone and partly brick.

In the beginning of the decade 1820-1830, the theatrical metropolis in the United States lay in Philadelphia. The splendid company at the Chestnut, led by Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wallace and the first Joseph Jefferson, was,

according to the English comedian, Francis C. Wemyss,⁶ far superior to that of the Park Theatre in New York. But the rivalry of the three theatres in Philadelphia and internal dissension brought about the disintegration of the companies and financial bankruptcy. By 1830 the theatrical primacy passed to New York City to which, as the main port of entry, foreign stars came first. By a curious paradox, this fact led to the rise of the great period of the American drama, in which Philadelphia playwrights wrote plays for their own theatres, beginning with *The Gladiator* by Robert Montgomery Bird and culminating in George Henry Boker's *Francesca da Rimini*. But that is another story.

For a description of this theatre see R. D. James, *Old Drury of Philadelphia*, 56-57, Phila., 1932.

⁶ *Twenty-six years of the life of an actor manager* 1: 70-72, New York, 1847.

THE TAVERNS OF COLONIAL PHILADELPHIA

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"In the beginning, there was a tavern. . . ." With these words the history of many a town might well commence. Writing in the journal of his travels to Florida and the Mississippi River in the early years of the American Revolution, William Bartram noted that the seat of government of the county of Cumberland, North Carolina, had sprung from an initial settlement consisting of a grist mill, saw mill, blacksmith shop, and a tavern. Over half a century later a lone tavern opened for business in thinly settled central New York State, and with the building of Clinton's ditch before its doors, served as the nucleus for the present day city of Syracuse. And fifty years after the opening of the Erie Canal, when the Texas cattle kings pierced the western plains region, many a cow town in Kansas began with a railroad siding and a wooden building where thirsty



FIG. 1. The Blue Anchor. When Penn arrived in 1682, he found that another man with an eye for a good spot was already preparing to open for business. From John F. Lewis, *The history of an old Philadelphia land title*, Phila., 1934.

cowboys could cool off and clean up from a long drive under the scorching sun. Behind every tavern, of course, was a man with an eye for a good spot and an inclination to cater to unknown travelers or his own gregarious neighbors.

Such a man had already picked a site at the junction of Dock Creek and the Delaware River, and was in the process of putting up a timber building, when Penn first arrived at that very spot in 1682 to found his wilderness city.¹ Eleven years before, an ordinance had been passed for the Dutch settlement at New Castle in the present state of Delaware, limiting the number of "Tappers of strong drink" to three in the town and a

few up the river.² One of these few was the building under construction when the *Welcome* landed, and for well over a century the Blue Anchor Tavern [F, V] at the northwest corner of Front and Dock Streets, or the sign of the Boatswain and Call as it was later referred to, was the scene of confabulations among river pilots and shallop men.

EARLY TAVERN REGULATIONS

As the years passed and the city of Philadelphia grew along and back from the river, more and more public servants opened inns and taverns north and south along Water and Front Streets, and west on Market. Business was good, for the colonial city was both a port of entry for countless immigrants and travelers, and located on the main route between the rising city of New York to the northeast and the southern colonies. By 1744 there were over a hundred licensed public houses in operation, enough to alarm the Grand Jury and move them to ask for more stringent regulations for these potential sources of profanity, vice, and excessive tippling.³ Actually, however, there was an adequate number of ordinances already on the statute books; the negligence lay with the enforcing officers. From the time of Penn's landing until the mid-eighteenth century, some thirty laws had been passed in council relative to taverns and the sale of both strong and weak beverages. All public housekeepers had to be recommended to the Governor by the county justice before they could buy the necessary license to keep a tavern and sell liquors, and the fee of three pounds if wine was sold and two pounds if only beer and whiskeys were dispensed remained practically unchanged until the Revolution. But a conscientious and law abiding innkeeper found that there was more to being a public servant than just buying a license and hanging out the required sign designating the nature of his business.⁴ In the early

² Linn, John Blair (ed.), *Charter to William Penn and Laws of the province of Pennsylvania*, 448, Harrisburg, Lane S. Hart, 1879. Between 1664 and the time of Penn's arrival, the area that was to become Philadelphia was in the possession of the Duke of York, brother of Charles II and himself the future James II. His laws were in force from 1676 to 1682, and those dealing with public houses were the basis for all such further legislation under Penn.

³ Bell, William, Report of Grand Jury to the Mayor, *Penna. Mag.* 22: 497-498, 1898.

⁴ Because of the public service nature of taverns, their keepers were required by the Duke of York's laws to hang out a sign for the benefit of strangers. The adoption of easily identified symbols, such as a white horse or three crowns, had a long precedent in European practise, and was a gesture towards the illiterate. Much sentimentality has been written about the tavern keeper taking along his sign when he moved to a new location.

¹ Lippincott, Horace M., *Early Philadelphia*, 122-123, Phila., Lippincott, 1917.

THREE EARLY TAVERNS

years of the colony he was held responsible at various times for not charging travelers over seven pence half penny per meal, "Which meale shall Consist of beefe, pork or such like produce of the Country"; and for charging "a horseman, Nothing; hee paying Six pence a night for his horse's hay or grass."⁵ Tippling on Sundays was frowned upon, and any innkeeper could be fined half a pound if a single magistrate discovered his countenancing it. A price ceiling was placed on selling strong beer and ale by the small measure, and any bar-keep with the temerity to dilute his proffered spirits had to pay treble its value, one half of the money going to the Governor and the other half to the person discovering the deed. Selling rum and brandy to the Indians, making them "sometimes destroy one another, and grievously annoy and Disquiet the people of [the] Province" was heavily fined as "an heinous offence to God, and a reproach to the blessed name of Christ, and his holy Religion."⁶ Likewise, selling strong liquors to negro servants of the inhabitants was forbidden unless the innkeeper had special dispensation from the servant's master to do so. Credit beyond twenty shillings could not be extended to any frequenter of public houses, and "to the end that no Mariners [should] be Arrested to hinder their Voyage," no credit could be given them "without the master of the ship or vessel (to whom such mariners belong), engage for the same, Otherwise [innkeepers] to lose what they so trust."⁷

The above regulations suggest the civic responsibilities inherent in the idea of our early public houses, which developed through the decades, in keeping with the English and continental tradition, along three main lines. *Inns* and *taverns* can be thought of as synonymous terms, referring to business ventures licensed to lodge travelers and to serve meals and beverages to both travelers and the local men-about-town. *Coffee houses* were primarily opened for the benefit of merchants, to furnish them a central location for meeting ship captains over a punch bowl or hot toddy, and to coordinate the mercantile trade of the city.⁸ Operating outside the law were the *tippling houses*, unlicensed taverns mainly preoccupied with serving strong liquors and providing entertainment for the driftwood and dregs of society that inevitably accumulate in any fast growing seaport town. These tippling houses have left no record save in the docket books of the Court of Quarter Sessions on the occasions of their owners being prosecuted, and need detain us only in so far as our mentioning the fact that they always existed in the colony in some degree.

A study of the practise in early Philadelphia, however, reveals that more often than not the sign remained behind, that it was more closely identified with a building than with an individual.

⁵ Linn, *op. cit.*, 173.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 151.

⁸ In the middle colonies a light meal served in a tavern was called an *ordinary*. In the southern colonies, especially Virginia, inns and taverns were frequently referred to as ordinaries.

Among the earliest taverns of note that long outlived their original keepers and saw or nearly saw the dawn of the nineteenth century, Clark's Inn (the sign of the Half Moon after the Revolution), the Indian King, and the Conestoga Wagon deserve a word. Elizabeth Drinker noted in her journal in 1796, at the time of the demolition of the Half Moon, that it had been built in 1690 by a man named Clark. In that early day, located in Chestnut across from the State House, Clark's Inn [B, III] was practically in the country. But the growth of the city soon enfolded it, and it became a convenient dropping-in place for assemblymen and other public servants whose business took them to the State House. Even after the establishment of the federal government in Philadelphia, the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania found it convenient to lodge two Seneca chiefs who had come to the seat of government on treaty business, Cornplanter and Half Town, at this century old inn until arrangements could be made to place them in private houses.⁹ And it was in the last decade of the Half Moon's existence, when the proprietor was a William Hassell with several attractive daughters, that Aaron Burr was purported to have had more than a usual interest in the place.¹⁰

At the sign of the Conestoga Wagon [C, III], spelled seven different ways in the records,¹¹ on the south side of Market Street between Fourth and Fifth Streets, good treatment was tendered both man and horse as early as 1742, and sixty years later the inn was still doing business. Here in 1774 the proprietress advertised in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* that she had a "likely young Negroe Wench" for sale. During the occupation of the city by the British, this same hostess proved to be a kind-hearted Whig who frequently served as an intermediary between jailed patriots and their estranged loved ones. Five years later the disastrously impetuous General Charles Lee took lodgings here, fell sick, and met his final inglorious end within its walls.¹² Two of the four writing Beatty Brothers, Erkuries and Reading, exchanged letters through the medium of the Conestoga Wagon, and during the Federal Convention of 1787 some of the delegates put up here.

⁹ *Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania* 16: 513, Harrisburg, Theo. Fenn, 1853.

¹⁰ For the story of Burr's interest in Mr. Hassell's daughter Lenora, see Struthers Burt's recent book *Philadelphia: holy experiment*, 315-316, N. Y., Doubleday, 1945.

¹¹ An interesting sidelight on colonial orthography, the six spellings other than the current one in the text are: Conestogo, Conestogoe, Connastago, Connestogo, Connostogo and a very muddled Convestigoe. Wagon, of course, was spelled with two g's as often as not.

¹² Langworthy, Edward, *Memoir of Major General Lee*, *Coll. N. Y. Hist. Soc.*, 161, 1874. In his latest book, *Rag, tag and bobtail*, 288, N. Y., Harpers, 1952. Lynn Montross says Lee died in "a shabby Philadelphia waterfront inn." Langworthy's memoir is adequately documented, and there was only one Conestoga wagon in Market Street. It was neither on the waterfront nor shabby.

Prior to 1729 the sign of the Indian King [E, III] was already a landmark on the south side of Market Street between Second and Third Streets. An Owen Owen, coroner of Philadelphia county, was its keeper for well over a decade, during which time his daughter Sarah married a young and prosperous merchant named John Biddle. Together, in 1749, these two, now middle-aged, took over the management of the staid old Indian King, a venture that didn't end until after the British occupied the city in the winter of 1777-1778. Although the elder Biddle never seems to have taken a prominent part in public affairs outside of his role as innkeeper, his sons Owen and Clement, names still familiar in present day Philadelphia, were both to assume active roles during and after the Revolution. Owen operated on the homefront as chairman of the Council of Safety, a crucial force in waging the war until its dissolution in 1777 as part of the reorganization of the commonwealth under a new constitution; and Clement, after service in the army as an officer, edited one of the first satisfactory directories of the city in 1791. Over the decades the Indian King was the scene of meetings of the Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons, and furnished bed and board to President Ezra Stiles of Yale University on his visit to the city in 1754. The next year a Daniel Fisher of Virginia put up at Biddle's inn while passing through the city, and wrote in his diary that its proprietor was "a very civil courteous Quaker" who with his wife was the epitome of true politeness. "For tho' this house," he continued, "is one of the greatest business in its way in the whole city, yet everything is transacted with the utmost regularity and decorum. There is a regular ordinary every Day, of the very best provisions and well dressed . . . the best liquors proportionately moderate [in price]; and the best use taken of horses."¹³ When the English soldiers who took Fort Duquesne during the French and Indian War returned east through Philadelphia, the officers were in part housed at the Indian King.

John Biddle was in his seventies, and the war for independence already three years old, when he was finally deposed as host at the Market Street hostelry. His wife had died before the outbreak of hostilities and his sons were now busy in the public service. Meanwhile, daily life seethed with the affairs of war. Biddle's inn served as a clearing house for the reporting of sick soldiers in and near Philadelphia after Washington's retreat across New Jersey prior to the battle of Trenton, and on another occasion Biddle was engaged in litigation, abetted by the fact that his son Owen headed the Board of War, over the impressing of his indented servant boy into the Ninth Virginia Regiment, in a thwarted attempt on the part of the latter unit to meet its quota by fair means or foul. During Howe's encampment in the city, a new keeper took over the Indian

King, changed its name to the British Tavern, and began catering to the enemy navy. Here, on May 25, 1778, at a secret meeting of Tory sympathizers, the forthcoming evacuation of the city under Sir Henry Clinton's direction was announced.

FIRST COFFEE HOUSES

In the first half-century of the city's existence, at least three coffee houses were operating in imitation of their English counterparts. Merchants drank the never too popular beverage at the Widow Roberts' [F, III], the west side of Front between Market and Chestnut,



FIG. 2. The London Coffee House. Photograph taken in 1860, twenty-three years before the building was razed. A century of time and fortune changed this once fashionable meeting spot into a commonplace business enterprise. From John F. Lewis, *The history of an old Philadelphia land title*, Phila., 1934.

at the Widow James' [F, IV], northwest corner of Front and Walnut, and at the first London Coffee House in Water Street. However, it wasn't until the spring of 1754 that arrangements were completed to open a genuine public coffee house on a plan that set a precedent for the running of the City Tavern two decades later. The well-known London Coffee House [F, III] at the southwest corner of Front and Market, housed in a building constructed in 1702 on a lot twenty-five feet by one hundred feet running parallel to the market, was established on a subscription basis. That is, the leading merchants of the city interested in having

¹³ Fisher, Daniel, Private diary, *Penna. Mag.* 17: 263-264, 1893.

a central exchange where they could carry on business in a genial atmosphere contributed to the initial capital of the business in return for a voice in the running of the place. William Bradford, grandson of the first printer to locate in the middle colonies, nephew of Andrew Bradford who began the first newspaper in Philadelphia, and a printer himself, was prevailed upon to become proprietor of the new coffee house. For a quarter of a century, save for a year and a half when he took an active part in the fighting of the Revolution, Bradford was the leading public house figure in the city. Popular as a personality and influential as a publisher, Bradford was in a position through the years to marshal public opinion against the Stamp Act, which he opposed vehemently, and against the landing of the tea ship in Philadelphia following the Boston Tea Party.

LONDON COFFEE HOUSE

Although the London Coffee House probably had facilities for lodging some travelers, it does not seem to have used its rooms for this purpose to any important extent.¹⁴ On the first floor was a bar and a sizable public room where representative newspapers of the colonies and the old country were available to be read, and where lemonade, coffee, wine, and spirituous liquors could be quaffed according to one's personal taste. In another part of the house was a room or rooms where private meetings could be held. The Society for the Relief of Poor and Distressed Masters of Ships, their Widows and Children met here for a number of years, and in the early days of the Committee of Safety, organized to clear the city of Tory sympathizers, Christopher Marshall noted in his diary that the group met here frequently, as many as twenty-nine members at one time.

Centrally located overlooking the busy waterfront, and immediately adjacent to the twice weekly market, the Coffee House was in an almost inescapable spot for anyone involved in the commercial life of the city. So it was that public vendues were continually being held there. This custom, of course, added to the patronage of the house by drawing buyers from the surrounding countryside. Real estate was the most frequent item disposed of through the years, but sloops, schooners, and brigantines, their inventories posted beforehand, were sold also, and at high noon on market days there was usually a large horse sale following a parading of the animals through the main city streets.

Politics was an ever present topic on the agenda of coffee house discussions, with Editor Bradford of the *Pennsylvania Journal* continually revealing his own

staunch convictions. The place was a significant crossroads for ideas and events throughout the French and Indian War, and during the brewing years of the Revolution. The captain of the first tea ship to arrive in the Delaware after the midnight tea scandal in Boston anchored three and a half miles below the city and came up to the Coffee House to sound out public opinion before bringing his ship to port.¹⁵ No doubt Bradford was as instrumental as anyone in discouraging the venture, and the captain turned back his ship. For Tory sentiment was squelched as expediently as possible: in the case of Governor Hutchinson of Massachusetts Bay, his effigy was hung on a gallows and burned near the Coffee House, as was that of Benedict Arnold at a later time; when the vilified Dr. Kearsley was carted about the city for being a British sympathizer, his ignominious trip ended at the door of the Coffee House where some good samaritan gave him a bowl of punch to soothe his outrage; and an otherwise inconsequential shoemaker was one day made the object of ridicule before a group of reputable citizens in the public room, and finally made to apologize for attacking the measures of the First Continental Congress.

The decline of the London Coffee House as a first class tavern dates from late 1776, although it still operated under a series of keepers until 1793.¹⁶ Several reasons for its decline present themselves. In the first place, events in the colonial city with the arrival of the Continental Congress had simply outgrown the facilities of the comparatively small tavern, and the center of attraction had moved somewhat from the waterfront to the State House. Then too, Bradford's own popularity had been the cause of much of the Coffee House's success. When he left to fight in the battles of Trenton and Princeton, to be wounded in the latter and subsequently assume the chairmanship of the State Navy Board, his presence at the corner of Front and Market was sorely missed. He returned to take over the Coffee House after the British evacuated the city, but by then a new tavern had become the favorite resort of the key public figures and the socially prominent. Shattered in health, bowed in grief over the death of his wife Rachel, and his fortune ruined, Bradford passed out of the public eye around 1781. He died ten years later, his name coming back into public affairs for one brief moment the year before when the Supreme Executive Council of the state finally got around to voting him payment for service done the government as long ago as thirty years, to the sum total of 467 pounds.¹⁷

¹⁵ Wharton, Thomas, Letter to Thomas Walpole of England, *Penna. Mag.* 14: 78, 1890.

¹⁶ The *American Daily Advertiser* for June 20, 1793 contains a notice to the effect that a wine and cider bottling firm was operating at the southwest corner of Front and Market Streets in what was formerly known as the Old Coffee House.

¹⁷ *Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council*, op. cit., 527. The keeper who succeeded Bradford at the Coffee House paid two hundred pounds to lease the place for a year from its

¹⁴ In all the countless journals and diaries, letters and memoirs of people who visited Philadelphia during the period 1754-1793, not one mention has been run across of a person having lodged at the London Coffee House. Dr. Robert Honyman, a genteel traveler who passed through the city in 1775, went immediately to the Coffee House to get the latest news, but it seems significant that he lodged at another inn.

THE TAVERN LEGEND

During the eighteenth century literally hundreds and hundreds of innkeepers devised and hung out their gayly-colored, imaginative signs over the busy pavement of mushrooming Philadelphia, luring the road-shaken traveler in for a meal and a bed, or the local inhabitant in for a bitters and rum, a cherry toddy, or a glass of aristocratic Madeira. Today the signs are gone, and only the fanciful names remain to conjure up images of quaint hostelries which for the most part, to be truthful, were not really so quaint in their day. If one had a breezy room on the top floor of the Indian Queen overlooking the river Delaware, he was just as likely to have a stifling room overhanging the inner courtyard of the Black Bear, with the rattle of wagons and the smell of horses coming up from below. If one had a room to himself when he went to bed, he was just as likely to wake up in the morning and find he had a strange bedfellow who had arrived in the dead of night. And if one found himself among the learned of the city, quietly enjoying their beloved wines and planning the future of their American experiment, he was just as likely to find himself in a place where, as John Adams once harangued, "the time, the money, the health, and the modesty, of most that are young and of many old, are wasted; [where] diseases, vicious habits, bastards, and legislators, are frequently begotten."¹⁸ But the search for companionship is an old story in the history of man, and if from this unending search one tavern in eighteenth-century Philadelphia came into being, suffused with a primitive splendor and a history of personalities which we now consider quaint, then our minds must turn to the one with the most unpretentious, least imaginative name. The City Tavern (called Smith's or New Tavern at first) was the culmination of an institution that had been developing in Philadelphia for a century, and it timed the opening of its doors, quite by coincidence, with the opening of the critical years of revolution.

THE CITY TAVERN

The City Tavern [E, IV] on the west side of Second Street between Walnut and Chestnut was one of the few such buildings in the colonial city that was designed and constructed to meet a public need. Built by subscription in 1773, its board of directors represented a cross section of both the social and financial elite of the community, and its political factions. Among these the Cadwalader brothers, John and Lambert, were patriots from the start. So were John M. Nesbitt, a mercantilist who loaned much money to the rebel cause, and Dr. William Shippen, Jr., who later headed the Medical Department of the Continental Army. Robert Morris and

owner, John Pemberton. Had Bradford been paid a decade earlier, he could have stayed in business for two more years. In his condition this wouldn't have helped much, however.

¹⁸ Adams, Charles Francis, *The works of John Adams* 2: 85, Boston, Little and Brown, 1850.



FIG. 3. The City Tavern. At the crossroads of the Revolution, this public house probably entertained more famous Americans than any other eighteenth-century tavern. After William Birch, 1799. Courtesy of Free Library of Philadelphia.

Thomas Willing, wealthy partners in the shipping business, resisted the radical movement, though they eventually became stalwart patriots. Edward Shippen, lawyer father of the ill-fated Peggy, managed to walk the middle of the road between the contending factions, while Benjamin Chew was an unrepentant loyalist.¹⁹ These duly elected directors of the City Tavern leased the establishment to a manager, but always had a voice in its overall policies. Thus it is easy to see why, given the most genteel tavern in the colonies, as John Adams called it,²⁰ furnished after the London mode at

¹⁹ These eight gentlemen, together with two others whose complete identification has so far escaped the writer, were the signers of a statement in the summer of 1778 approving a new keeper who subsequently managed the City Tavern after Daniel Smith left. Such a diverse group of politically minded people working together on a Board of Directors at that time is a revealing, and rather ironic, comment on the period. MS statement in the Misc. Coll. of the Hist. Soc. of Penna.

²⁰ Burnett, Edmund C., *Letters of members of the Continental Congress* 1: 1, Washington, Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1921. Many writers have thought Adams was referring to the London Coffee House when he wrote this statement, but its context and common sense indicate otherwise when one is familiar with the tavern situation. The London Coffee House was twenty years old and no longer genteel in 1774: it was on its last legs as a popular meeting place. And Adams met Dr. Shippen upon arriving at the tavern. Shippen, as a subscriber to the newest tavern, would not have been likely to spend his evenings at the older coffee house. Besides, Adams refers to a curtain being drawn open in the room where he and several gentlemen were visiting, to expose "the other half of the chamber." This

great expense by the social and business leaders of the city, the establishment was not long in becoming the favorite rendezvous of those men who founded our government. An unending list of dress balls, sumptuous banquets, vocal and instrumental concerts, crucial committee meetings pertaining to the Revolution, and gatherings of patriotic societies would fill the day book of the tavern's journey through the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

To the City Tavern Paul Revere brought news of the Boston Port Bill, and at a clamorous meeting held within to decide what course the citizens of Philadelphia should follow, John Dickinson drew admiration for the "great coolness, calmness, moderation, and good sense" of his proposals, while the usually self-effacing Charles Thomson, later to be the marathon secretary of the Continental Congress, spoke with such vehemence that he fainted and was temporarily carried from the scene.²¹ Here delegates to the First Congress were feted by the local citizenry at the start and the finish of the sessions, John Adams making the acquaintance of Peyton Randolph and Richard Henry Lee of Virginia, and George Washington first attracting the attention that was later to change his destiny. During the next two decades Washington was to dine at this tavern many times, and to be feted with banquets and balls on the occasions of his appointment as Commander-in-Chief of the army, his birthdays, and his final elevation to the presidency. Benjamin Franklin attended a meeting of the Committee of Safety at the City Tavern, at which time three British officers who had been apprehended on their way to join General Gage's forces in Boston were forced to sign statements of loyalty to the rebel cause until they were either exchanged or set free at the end of a year.²²

Thomas Jefferson ate his meals here in company with his fellow Virginia delegates in 1775, and two years later, little more than a month before the battle of Brandywine, the young Lafayette, newly arrived from France and eager to share in the fight for liberty, first met his majestic hero, General Washington, at a small dinner party.²³ To celebrate both their return to the city after Clinton's retreat, and the glorious anniversary of their independence, Congress held a sumptuous banquet at the City Tavern on July 4, 1778, eighty gentlemen lingering over their multi-course meal to the strains of an orchestra brought in for the occasion, and the whole entertainment crowned with the proposal of

thirteen toasts, one for each of the colonies. In a few weeks these same gentlemen reassembled at the cost of 1,424 dollars for another banquet in honor of Monsieur Gérard, first ambassador from a continental power to their new nation and a symbol of the powerful alliance that would one day culminate in the unfortunate Genêt affair. But Washington's neutrality stand in the war between England and France was still in the future, and Monsieur Gérard found favor when he returned the honor of his reception with another celebration at the popular tavern on the occasion of Louis XVI's birthday. And here in the final year of his life the colorful Anthony Wayne—who is known to have spent at least one riotous night in the company of his fellow officers at this tavern which ended in the murder of a waiter by one of his close companions—was feted for the last time as Commander-in-Chief of the American army.²⁴

The City Tavern was a unique institution in several respects, combining successfully for the first and last

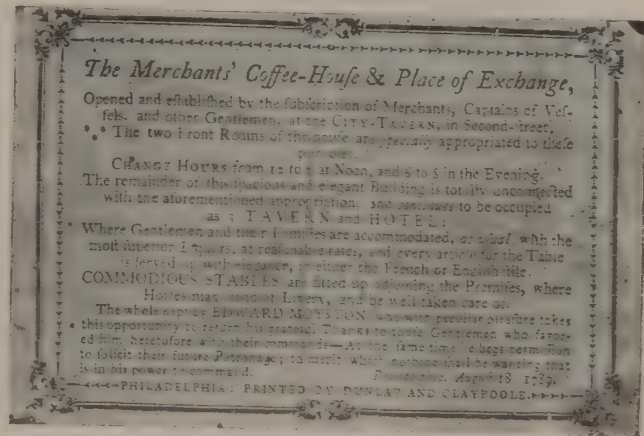


Fig. 4. Business card distributed by the keeper of the City Tavern in 1789. The word "hotel" was just coming into popular usage in Philadelphia. Courtesy of Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

time the facilities of the early coffee house and the earlier inn, and effecting a transition to the later, and much more elaborate hotel. On the ground floor front it had two rooms appropriated for the serving of coffee, where merchants and captains of vessels could transact business, where market prices and ship movements were posted, and where the news of the town was disseminated. Behind these was the long room where banquets were held for as many as a hundred guests, and balls were given. The rest of the house was reserved for meeting and lodging rooms. The fact that the tavern did not have stables in its early years and that none of the delegates to the early congresses are on record as having lodged there, makes one suspect that it was

was obviously the long room of the City Tavern, which was so fitted that it could serve as one room or two.

²¹ Stillé, Charles J., *The life and times of John Dickinson*, 107-108, Phila., Hist. Soc. of Penna., 1891.

²² *Minutes of the Supreme Executive Council* 10: 302, *op. cit.*, 1852.

²³ Gottschalk, Louis (ed.), *The letters of Lafayette to Washington*, viii, N. Y., privately printed by Helen Fahnstock Hubbard, 1944.

²⁴ Wildes, Harry Emerson, *Anthony Wayne*, 234 and 449, N. Y., Harcourt, Brace, 1941. Also, Fisher, Samuel, *Journal, Penna. Mag.* 41: 411, 1917.

not primarily a hostelry at first. However, in its second decade it acquired both a stable and the house adjoining to accommodate better its overnight guests, lodged some of the delegates to the Federal Convention in 1787, and in 1790 the census lists its occupants as thirty in number. Unlike its predecessors, which were usually run by the innkeeper and his wife alone, the City Tavern was largely an impersonal venture, the manager never becoming closely identified with the business, and the cook and barkeep being employed from outside the manager's family. In this respect the City Tavern was the forerunner of the modern hotel, and of prime importance in the light of social history.

OELLER'S HOTEL

Even as the London Coffee House gave way in popularity to the City Tavern after a twenty-year period, so the City Tavern began to be eclipsed by the new



FIG. 5. The Indian Queen Hotel, on the east side of Fourth Street near Chestnut. From John F. Lewis, *The history of an old Philadelphia land title*, Phila., 1934.

Oeller's Hotel [A, IV] after 1790. Located in Chestnut Street beyond Sixth, next door to Rickett's Circus and in the same building that had previously been the Episcopal Academy, it seems to have been Philadelphia's first hotel.²⁵ Managed by a gentleman who had gone bankrupt as a broker but who made a fine success of innkeeping, Oeller's Hotel in the nineties became the scene of the Assembly balls, countless musical entertainments, meetings of such groups as the Society of Cincinnati and the Philadelphia Medical Society, and saw the introduction of the German waltz to American

²⁵ The term "hotel" probably was introduced to Philadelphia by the French emigrés. In France the word was used in reference to an elaborate public building such as an *hôtel de ville* or an *hôtel-Dieu*. In the colonies, however, it became synonymous with an expensively furnished tavern. The keeper of the City Tavern began calling his place a hotel in 1789, but James Oeller was the first person to name his establishment a hotel from its opening day. During the nineties at least six tavern keepers jumped on the bandwagon and opened "hotels."

dancers.²⁶ Talleyrand frequented the place, and here Citizen Genêt was feted at a gala banquet upon his arrival in this country, nineteen toasts being drunk to the accompaniment of artillery fire and all directed to the glory of America and the French Republic. While Congress was in session, Oeller's played host to many of the delegates, some of whom lodged there, while many others found it convenient to drop in for lunch and a cup of punch during temporary adjournments at the near by State House. Its Assembly Room an unheard-of sixty feet square,²⁷ "with a handsome music gallery at one end [and] papered after the French taste, with the Pantheon figures in compartments, imitating festoons, pillars, and groups of antique drawings, in the same style as lately introduced in the most elegant houses in London,"²⁸ Oeller's was surely headed for another decade of popularity when a dreadful fire broke out in Rickett's Circus, spread to the hotel, and consumed both buildings on December 17, 1799.

Thus far one might be led to believe that the social, commercial, and political life of early Philadelphia was centered in only a few public houses, but the actual records deny the fact. Brief mention must be made of several others that are representative of the scores that still remain unsung. There was the Tun Tavern [G, IV] on the waterfront, known before the Revolution as Peggy Mullan's Beefsteak House, where the United States Navy and Marine Corps were organized in 1775; the two Indian Queens, one at the southeast corner of Market and Fourth [D, III] where the wounded Lafayette recuperated after his first battle, and the other in Fourth near Chestnut [D, III] where the servant greeting the Reverend Manasseh Cutler in 1787 was a Negro neatly dressed in a blue coat with red sleeves and a red cape, a buff waistcoat and breeches, a ruffled shirt, and his hair powdered; Henry Eppler's sign of the Rainbow in Race Street [E, I], meeting place of the City Troop of Light Dragoons and scene of many amateur concerts after the war. There was the Bunch of Grapes on the east side of Third Street between Market and Arch, a favorite dining-out spot for two decades; the Cross Keys at the northeast corner of Third and Chestnut, avocation of the wealthy Israel Israel who gave unstintingly of his time and effort during the great yellow fever epidemic of 1793; the George Inn, southwest corner of Arch and Second [E, II], long a stage line center; and the Crooked Billet [G, III] on the waterfront, whose sign, composed of several crooked pieces of wood transversely arranged, first attracted the

²⁶ *General Aurora Advertiser*, February 28, 1797. The waltz was introduced at one of a series of balls given at Oellers' by two dancing teachers.

²⁷ The long room at the City Tavern was fifty feet in length, and obviously something less in width. A calculated guess would be twenty-five to thirty feet. Oeller's surely had a drawing card in its much larger ball room.

²⁸ Wansey, Henry, *Excursion to the United States*, 119, Salisbury, J. Easton, 1798.

young Franklin when he landed in Philadelphia, and was still attracting patrons at the end of the century.

In the beginning, there was a tavern—the Blue Anchor on the waterfront. As the colonial city grew in size and importance, the popular taverns grew similarly and traced the spread of the city: the London Coffee House in Front Street, the City Tavern in Sec-

ond, Oeller's Hotel beyond Sixth. Surrounding these four, many hundred others came into being and then disappeared, fulfilling their roles in the daily life of old Philadelphia. Their stories are still left largely untold, but our primary goal has been attained if we have suggested the importance of the colonial tavern in the formative years of the city and country we know today.

PHILADELPHIA PRISONS OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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WHEN we consider the present character of the prison system of Pennsylvania, it is difficult to conceive that this state once was regarded as a fount of inspiration for penal reformers in the old countries of the civilized world. The significant changes in the penal law which followed the Revolution resulted in the gradual development of a penal system which for a generation found grateful imitators in many lands and made Philadelphia's prisons famous, especially the Walnut Street Prison and the Eastern State Penitentiary. The former of these institutions disappeared well over a century ago, but the latter is still standing, a dismal reminder of a philosophy of correction, which, whatever may have been its merits, has had to yield to newer ideas and events.

In the small villages of the early colony, there was little need of jails. A fort or blockhouse served these purposes when the occasion arose. The arrival of William Penn gave the jail a new function, however. His laws looked with little favor on capital punishment. Early provincial legislation abolished this punishment for all crimes but "willful and premeditated killing"—treason was a capital crime too—and substituted imprisonment at hard labor, the first instance in modern history where a commonwealth introduced such imprisonment as the standard punishment for serious offenses. Every county was required to have a prison which was to be a workhouse for felons, vagrants, and loose and idle persons, an idea which was not to be fully realized until more than a century had passed.

The first jail in Philadelphia was a cage, i.e., a strong box-like room, "seven feet long by five feet broad," erected at the intersection of Second and High Streets late in 1682 or early in 1683; it appears to have been sufficient until the Sheriff was forced in 1685 to rent a house on Second Street north of High Street and prepare it for its new purpose. The same year plans were made for the construction of a brick prison east of Second Street in the middle of High Street [F, III]. It was twenty feet long and fourteen wide; the lower story was but six and a half feet high, two thirds under ground, while the upper story was seven feet high and topped by an attic. Both stories were divided into two rooms; the keeper lived in half of the house. The building was not completed until 1695 and was within a few years found inadequate. Nevertheless, it was not until 1718 that an act was passed providing for the erection of a new prison and workhouse, which was ready a few years later. This prison, built of stone, consisted of two buildings, both of similar design, one facing High Street at the southwest corner of Third Street [D, III], and the other nearby facing Third Street; the latter was

the "workhouse" and housed criminals, the other was used for debtors, runaway apprentices, untried prisoners, etc.

The same year the stone jail was projected, a great change in the penal law destroyed Penn's design. The sanguinary and dishonoring penalties in use in England were again introduced. The pillory and the whipping post which by that time had been moved to the market in High Street, east of Third, was again more commonly used, death threatened a dozen offenses and all those guilty of second felonies, except thieves, who probably represented two-thirds of the criminals dealt with by the courts, and who might still be punished by imprisonment. They, and the vagrants, disorderly and idle poor became the denizens of the "workhouse."¹

The city was growing. Center of shipping, seaport, capital, debarkation point of emigrants headed for the hinterland, its criminality kept increasing. Within a few decades the jail was constantly overcrowded. Corrupt jailers and turnkeys, the impossibility of segregating the different types of prisoners of both sexes and idleness brought all the evils bewailed by the contemporary reformers of the mother country. Finally, it was decided in 1773 to build a new prison and workhouse, and a site was purchased on Walnut Street opposite the State House [B, IV]. It measured about two hundred feet in width and four hundred feet in depth, bounded on the south by Prune Street. The "New Gaol," designed by Robert Smith, member of the American Philosophical Society, was ready in part to receive prisoners in January 1776, and 105 prisoners were moved to their new quarters. About the middle of the year the inmates were returned to the old jail, the new prison having been requisitioned by Congress for the confinement of captured enemies, collaborators, and military personnel. It served this purpose until 1784 (even the British army used it as a military prison, while it occupied Philadelphia) when it was finally restored to the county and the prisoners brought back from the stone jail, which was sold and razed the following year.

The old jail had been pictured as a "school for crime" or a "seminary of vice." Samuel Rowland Fisher, who

¹ By an act of 1767, passed the same year, the new buildings of the Philadelphia Almshouse and House of Employment were opened at Eleventh and Spruce Streets. Justices of the peace were authorized to commit "rogues, vagabonds and other idle and dissolute persons to the House of Employment." See Lawrence, Charles, *History of the Philadelphia almshouses and hospitals* . . . , 23, 33, published by the author, Phila., 1905. It was in the House of Employment that a "treadmill" was used briefly in 1819 and not in the Walnut Street prison, as claimed by some writers.

spent two years in the High Street building, 1779–1781, wrote that the prisoners were

crowded in many of the Rooms being about 100 persons in all Men & Women, who live in a very dirty manner & some of them seem to be much abandoned to almost every vice . . . this place is such a sink of wickedness that it can scarcely be expected any tender feelings can remain long with them, so that those who are desirous of reforming the remaining part of their lives are truly much to be pitted.²

The keeper, John Reynolds, a former tavern-operator, and his turnkeys were questionable characters; Reynolds was said to be in league with some of the worst offenders in the city and was suspected of sharing in their profits. Since he was retained when the prisoners were moved to the Walnut Street building in 1784 and stayed in office there until the new prison was removed from the control of the Sheriff, we may assume that except for better housing facilities the new prison was run no better than was the old.

There are writers who believe that the growing severity of the criminal law of Pennsylvania before the Revolution was due to the belief of the lawmakers of the colony that the early laws of the province had been too lenient. The statutes of 1767, 1769, and 1780, adding counterfeiting, arson, armed theft, and robbery to the list of capital offenses would seem to offer supporting evidence. On the other hand, William Bradford claimed that "the severity of our criminal law is an exotic plant and not the native growth of Pennsylvania. It has been endured, but I believe, has never been a favorite."³ Anyway, the first state constitution adopted in 1776 directed the state legislature to reform the penal law and make punishments "in some cases less sanguinary and in general more proportionate to the crimes." To this end, "houses ought to be provided for punishing by hard labor, those convicted of crimes not capital; wherein the criminals shall be employed for the benefit of the public, or for reparation of injuries done to private persons: And all persons at proper times shall be admitted to see the prisoners at their labour." The aim was to "deter more effectually from the commission of crimes, by continued visible punishment of long duration." The members of the constitutional convention evidently favored a partial return to the penal program of William Penn.

The war delayed legislative action until 1786. An act was passed that year, the preamble of which pointed to the failure of existing laws to curb crime, because they neither corrected or reformed the offender nor deterred others. These aims might "be better effected by continued hard labor, publicly and disgracefully imposed . . . , not only in the manner pointed out by the convention, but in streets of cities and towns, and upon the highways of the open country and other public works.

. . ." Robbery and burglary and certain rare sex offenses were removed from the list of capital crimes, and imprisonment at hard labor was substituted; the same punishment was imposed for a number of serious offenses which previously had usually been punished by whipping, or in rare cases by branding and mutilation.

The act of 1786 no doubt spared the citizens of Philadelphia from viewing a few executions at Center Square and a great many whippings at the post in the High Street market, but it introduced other equally disgraceful spectacles. Soon gangs of "wheelbarrowmen" could be seen at work in the streets of the city. Their multi-colored prison uniforms, bearing symbols indicative of their crimes, and their fetters made them objects of curiosity. In spite of guards, or perhaps with their connivance, the prisoners made contacts with their friends and at times returned to the jail after work drunk. Fights among them occurred in the streets.

The moral atmosphere of the jail, under John Reynolds' keepership was no antidote. In September, 1787, the Grand Jury made a presentment, which stated that

the prison seems to them to be open, as to the general intercourse between the criminals of the different sexes; and that there is not even the appearance of decency (from what they can learn) with respect to the scenes of debauchery that naturally result from such a situation; inasmuch, that it appears to the Jury from undoubted information, that the gaol has become a desirable place for the more wicked and polluted of both sexes; to so great a degree, that there are numberless instances of vicious and wicked people [especially prostitutes] signing fictitious notes, and confessing judgment before justices of the peace, in order to be committed, and actually return to prison before they have been out many hours.⁴

The main corridor, it was said, had become a general meeting place, where debtors and criminals intermingled, because liquor was sold "at the door, by small measure, by the gaoler, or by his permission, contrary . . . to the law of this commonwealth." Under such circumstances it is not to be wondered at that riots and fights occasionally occurred among the prisoners and that mass escapes sometimes took place. In 1787–1789, 78 out of 290 men convicts escaped.

The leaven of more advanced ideas on the nature and aim of punishment was at work, however. A strong movement for penal reform had been growing in Europe. Political and legal philosophers had laid the groundwork for a more democratic and humane criminal code (Hobbes, Montesquieu, Beccaria, the French encyclopedists) and humanitarians had fought for the establishment of punishments that would be reformatory. These movements were well known to the leading men in Philadelphia, who were particularly acquainted with the English penal reformers, first among whom was John Howard, whose great work on "The State of the Prisons" was published in 1777. In 1785 the Supreme

² *Journal of Samuel Rowland Fisher of Philadelphia, 1779–1781*. Contributed by Anna Wharton Morris, 88, 91, no publisher, no date cited.

³ Quoted in Smithers, W. W., *Treatise on executive clemency in Pennsylvania*, 29, Phila., International Printing Co., 1909.

⁴ *Pennsylvania Gazette*, September 26, 1787.

Executive Council suggested that the legislature consider the preparation of regulations for the Walnut Street prison and submitted a long list of rules mostly extracted from Howard's book. Howard had seen in the typical English jails the same moral contamination which the indiscriminate mingling of prisoners had caused in the Philadelphia jails; his entire effort was directed at the proper segregation of different classes of prisoners and to make jails safe and decent places of detention and turn houses of correction into workshops. For a jail, he recommended individual sleeping cells for felons; he may have favored such cells for day-time use also but assumed it would be difficult to keep felons separated from one another all the time. Privacy at night would be desirable for "solitude and silence are favourable to reflection; and may possibly lead . . . to repentance."⁵

The failure of the act of 1786 made changes necessary. The leadership in reform was taken by a group of thirty-seven citizens, who organized on May 8, 1787, the Philadelphia Society for Alleviating the Miseries of Public Prisons. Among them we note Benjamin Rush, Bishop William White, and Tench Coxe. Some of the charter members were prominent Quakers and thirteen were members of the American Philosophical Society. Visits made to the jail and the scandals connected with the system of working convicts in public caused the Society to memorialize the legislature in January, 1788, asking that such labor be abolished, that "more *private* or even *solitary* labor" be substituted, and that the sexes be separated and the sale of liquor in the jail prohibited. A month later the Supreme Executive Council sent a message to the legislature, signed by Benjamin Franklin, recommending that changes be made in the penal law "calculated to render punishment a means of reformation, and the labour of criminals of profit to the state. Late experiments in *Europe* have demonstrated that those advantages are only to be obtained by temperance, and solitude with labour."⁶ Late that year the legislature appointed a committee to revise the law and the Society, in response to a request by the Supreme Executive Council, presented a lengthy report on conditions in the institution. It concluded that the only solution was to provide solitary confinement at hard labor for convicts, enforce temperance, keep the sexes constantly separated, and separate the debtors from those held for trial. An act of March 27, 1789, embodied many of the recommendations, but while it provided for the separation of the sexes and of debtors from other prisoners, it did not provide for solitary confinement. Public labor was abolished. Debtors and all misdemeanants, convicted or not, were to be placed in the workhouse building on Prune Street (completed by 1785), where the women prisoners had been held since the Society

made its first protest early the preceding year. The workhouse was to be "the gaol" and under the authority of the sheriff; the main prison was to be for felons and those held for trial or convicted of lesser crimes. Since space seemed adequate, the courts of all counties were given discretionary right to commit prisoners, sentenced to hard labor for over a year, to the prison which thereby came to serve as the first state prison of Pennsylvania.

The Society promptly engaged in a publicity campaign in favor of solitary confinement at hard labor. A year later, April 5, 1790, a new law was adopted which made significant changes in the administration and the treatment of inmates in the institution. The workhouse was reserved for debtors and witnesses and its title changed to "The Debtor's Apartment." Misdemeanants were to be housed in the prison and thus were removed from the control of the sheriff. As it was hoped "that the addition of unremitted solitude to laborious employment as far as it can be effected will contribute as much to reform as to deter [prisoners]," a separate cell house with a suitable number of cells was to be constructed in the yard of the prison "for the purpose of confining therein the more hardened and atrocious offenders . . . who have been sentenced to hard labour for a term of years. . . ." This building came to be referred to as the "penitentiary house." The act provided that the different classes and sexes of prisoners in the main building be kept separate and that those arriving with sentences to hard labor be kept temporarily in quarantine, washed, cleaned, and visited by a physician before allowed to mingle with other prisoners. Those who did not find room in the solitary cells would have to be kept in the main building. Convicts were to wear a plain uniform and were to work at tasks "of the hardest and most servile kind"; and they should be "kept separate and apart from each other" during work, if possible. Those with longer sentences than six months were to be charged the cost of their food, clothing, and materials for labor but were to be credited with their work. Separate accounts were to be kept with each such prisoner. If he earned more than his keep, half of the balance was to be given to him on discharge or used to buy him decent clothes. A room was to be set aside in the prison as an infirmary, and visits were regulated. Finally, a board of inspectors of twelve citizens was established to supervise the institution.

Acts were passed in 1791 and 1792 which made further modifications in the management of the institutions. The 1792 act, provided for the relief of debtors, gave the prison inspectors the power to inspect and make rules for the debtor's apartment, and placed the keeper of that building on a salary basis, marking the end of the fee system. (The keeper of the prison had been put on salary in 1786.) But the act of April 22, 1794, brought the greatest change and shaped the penal system as it was to remain without significant modifica-

⁵ Howard, John, *The state of the prisons of England and Wales* . . . , 43, Warrington, 1777.

⁶ *Minutes of the Twelfth General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1787-1788*, 102.

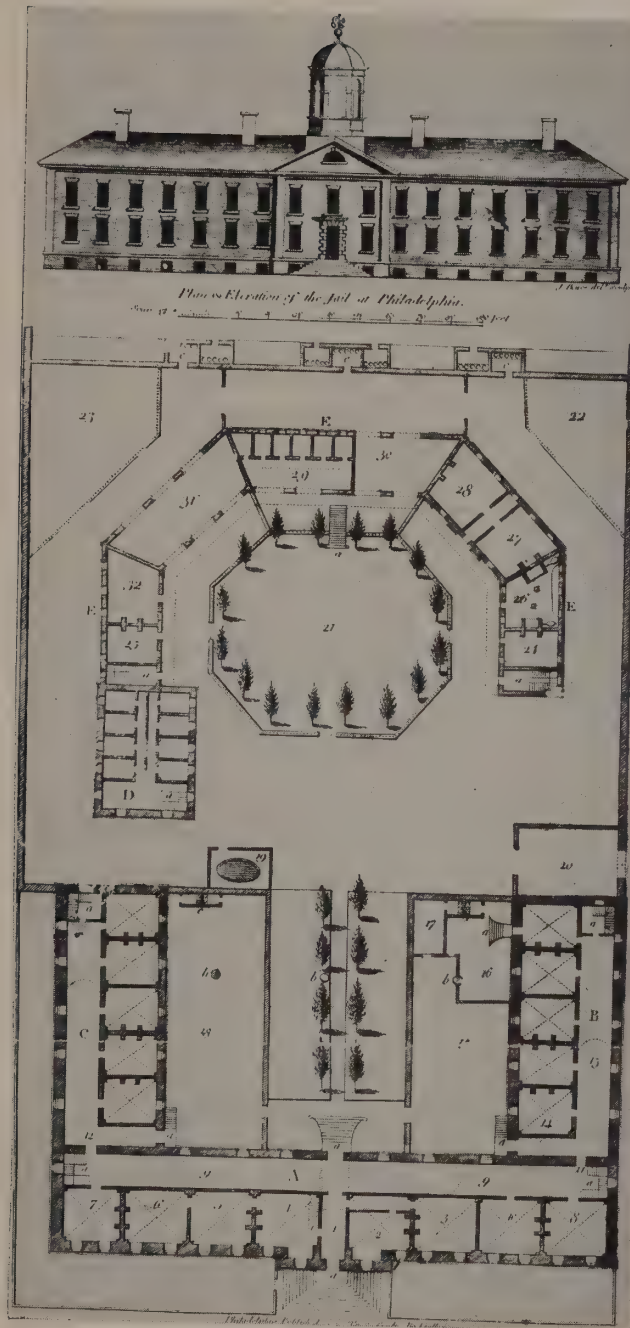


FIG. 1. The Walnut Street Prison in 1798.
(Source, see note 8.)

tions for a long time to come. This act set up the popular definition of murder in the first degree and abolished the death penalty for all other crimes, which were from then on to be punished by imprisonment at hard labor, the convict to be "kept in the solitary cells . . . on low and coarse diet, for such part . . . of his or her imprisonment as the court, in their sentence, shall direct and appoint," not less than one twelfth or more than one half of the term imposed. The inspectors were given the power to make the prisoner serve the solitary

part of his sentence in installments. Those who for a second offence, previously capital, were sentenced to life or twenty-five years could be confined in the solitary cells for whatever periods the inspectors might determine. A year later a law gave the inspectors complete control over the prison, including the appointment of the keeper, and abolished the humiliating prison garb, as well as the requirement that the work of the prisoners be of "the hardest and most servile kind."

It is claimed that the "penitentiary house" was filled very soon after it was finished in 1791. It had but sixteen cells, eight on each floor. The building was raised on arches, a plan recommended by John Howard to prevent prisoners from digging their way out.⁷ On each of the upper floors the cells lined the outside walls; the corridor, ten feet wide, running between the cells the length of the structure was divided lengthwise by a solid wall. Each cell was eight by six feet and ten feet high, had a barred and louvered window near the ceiling, and was equipped with a toilet connected with a sewer pipe which could be flushed by the guard with water pumped into a cistern on the roof. After 1795, and perhaps earlier, the cells were used also for disciplinary punishments, the dungeons, or basement rooms of the main building having been converted into storage rooms. On at least one occasion, during one of the yellow fever epidemics, the cells in the top story were used as a hospital.

Much praise was lavished by contemporary authors on the system of solitary confinement used in the Walnut Street Prison, and many later historians have echoed these sentiments. A closer examination of the record leads to the conclusion that the experiment was highly overrated. The convict docket of the prison shows that in 1795, out of 117 convicts admitted, only 4 arrived with sentences requiring that they spend a part of their term in solitary. All were counterfeiters, committed from Lancaster, and each received the minimum (one-twelfth of the sentence): one was to be in solitary sixteen months, two, fifteen months and one, a woman, four months. In 1796, out of 139 convicts committed, 7 received sentences containing similar specifications. Five of them, all sentenced for the same murder, were committed from Washington County on sentences of five years, five months of which were to be in the cells, a rapist arrived from Chester County on a twelve-year sentence, three years of which were to be spent in solitary confinement, and a counterfeiter committed from Dauphin County was to spend one year of ten in the cells. At least 28 convicts were admitted these years on sentences which under the law should have specified some solitary confinement, but they were spared that aggravation. Judges evidently did not apply the law consistently. These and other prisoners who were sentenced to ordinary imprisonment at hard labor or to simple imprisonment had no opportunity to suffer the presumed benefits of such treatment. Not until the

⁷ *Op. cit.*, 42-48; design facing, p. 48.

Eastern Penitentiary was put to use in 1830 was the theory of solitary confinement with labor, favored by the early reformers, actually put to the test.

The prison attracted many visitors during the 1790's and two of them, the refugee François, duc de La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, member of the American Philosophical Society, and the South Carolinian, Robert J. Turnbull, published extensive descriptions of the prison as it was in 1796.⁸ These glowing accounts

⁸ [La Rochefoucauld-Liancourt, François A. F., duc de], *On the prisons of Philadelphia. By an European*, Phila., Moreau St. Mery, 1796. Published also in a French edition, Phila., Moreau St. Mery, 1796 under the title *Des Prisons de Philadelphie. Par un Européen*. A Paris edition appeared the same year, followed by one in 1800 and a last revision in 1819, greatly enlarged. A Dutch translation appeared in Amsterdam in 1796 and a Danish one by E. F. Waltersdorff, Governor-General of the Danish West Indies, published in *Minerva*, a Copenhagen journal. A German translation from the English edition appeared in Leipzig in 1797, by C. G. Hilscher. Since its title was *Howards Praktisches System auf die Gefängnisse in Philadelphia Angewandt, zum Besten der Menschheit und als Beispiel für andere Staaten*, Kayser's *Bücher-Lexicon*, Leipzig, 1835, erroneously attributes this work to Howard.

Robert J. Turnbull, *A visit to the Philadelphia prison; Being an accurate and particular account of the wise and humane administration adopted in every part of the building . . .*, Phila. and London, 1797.

An earlier description is found in Caleb Lownes' *An account of the gaol and penitentiary house of Philadelphia and of the interior management thereof*, published as an addition to William Bradford, *An inquiry how far the punishment of death is necessary in Pennsylvania*, Phila., 1793.

A good account of the development of penal law and penal institutions in Pennsylvania is found in Harry Elmer Barnes, *The evolution of penology in Pennsylvania*, Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1927. The role of the Society for the Alleviation of the Miseries of Public Prisons (now the Pennsylvania Prison Society) in early efforts for prison reform is well presented in Negley K. Teeters, *They were in Prison*, Phila., John C. Winston Co., 1937. The best history of the Walnut Street Prison, still unpublished, has been prepared by Professor Rex A. Skidmore of the University of Utah, author of a brief arti-

made the institution famous in Europe as well as in the United States. They were written while the prison enjoyed its finest years. The inspectors were high-minded men, the labor program was varied and profitable both to the institution and the prisoners, who, under private contracts with citizens, received wages almost equal to those paid free workers. The discipline was good, even though occasional escapes occurred, and elementary and religious instruction was provided. Before the next century had begun, however, there were signs of degeneration, resulting from the growing overcrowding of the prison, and during the next thirty-five years the inspectors waged a constant battle for the erection of additional prisons. The Arch Street prison, put to use in 1816, and the Eastern Penitentiary, opened in 1830, afforded some relief until the new Reed Street prison (Moyamensing) was built and occupied on October 19, 1835, after which the Walnut Street institution was sold and razed.

cle on Penological Pioneering in the Walnut Street Jail, 1789-1799, *Jour. Criminal Law and Criminology* 39: 167-180, July-August, 1948. See also LeRoy B. DuPuy, The Walnut Street Prison. Pennsylvania's First Penitentiary, *Annual Report*, 1950, Philadelphia County Prison, Board of Inspectors, 13-27. The only published floor plan of the institution, exclusive of the Prune Street "workhouse" or "debtors apartment," is found in Vol. I of *The Philadelphia Monthly Magazine*, published by Thomas Condie, February, 1798. The accompanying description of the prison is largely taken from Turnbull. This plan was rediscovered by Professor Skidmore; it is reproduced in H. E. Barnes and N. K. Teeters, *New horizons in criminology*, 490, N. Y., Prentice-Hall, 1943. Standards histories of Philadelphia, especially those of Sharf and Westcott and E. P. Oberholtzer may also be consulted for interesting details. The best sources, as yet only partially exploited, are the various record books of the Walnut Street Prison now in the archives of the Philadelphia County Prison, especially the *Minutes of the Board of Inspectors*, complete from May 1794 on (it is not absolutely certain that minutes were kept during 1790-1794; if so they have been lost), the *Convict Docket*, Dec. 1794-, and the *Docket of Prisoners held for Trial*, 1790-.

CORRECTIONS ON THE MAP

In the course of the preparation of the articles questions arose regarding specific facts on the map. Here-with are listed certain changes which have received the approval of Mr. Simon.

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| <p>D,IV. INDEPENDENCE SQUARE was landscaped by Samuel Vaughan in 1754-1755. The observations of the Transit of Venus were made in Independence Square, not by David Rittenhouse, but by Dr. John Ewing and associates for the American Philosophical Society.</p> | <p>C,VII. THIRD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH. This has always been the official name of the Church; "Old Pine Presbyterian Church" is a localism. The present building is the original structure, greatly modified in 1837.</p> |
| <p>B,IV. CONGRESS HALL. It is doubtful that L'Enfant made alterations to the building in 1800.</p> | <p>D,IV. ISRAEL ISRAEL'S INN (north side of Harmony Street). From as early as 1785 and until the end of the century, except for a period of about two years between 1795 and mid-1797, Israel Israel's Inn was at the sign of the Cross Keys, northeast corner of Third and Chestnut.</p> |
| <p>E,III. BARBADOES STORE was the meeting place of Baptists and Presbyterians, not of Presbyterians and Methodists.</p> | <p>E,I. HARRY EPPLE'S INN (south side of Race Street). In 1791 Epple's sign of the Rainbow was numbered as being on the north side of Race Street, somewhere between Second and Fourth.</p> |
| <p>D,III. FRANKLIN'S HOUSE. Original house was built in 1764-1765 and an addition was made to it in 1789.</p> | <p>F,III. LONDON COFFEE HOUSE. The William Bradford who managed the London Coffee House from 1778 to 1780 was the same man who first opened its doors in 1754.</p> |
| <p>G,I. THE BANK MEETING HOUSE was on the west side of Front Street just north of Arch Street.</p> | |
| <p>D,I. RESIDENCE OF DR. W. M. SMITH. Dr. Smith was the first Provost of the College of Philadelphia, not the University of Pennsylvania.</p> | |



